

The Nation

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PERIODICALS DEPARTMENT

LETTER FROM MOSCOW

COUNTING THE VOTES AND THE DEAD

KATRINA VANDEN HEUVEL

A wave of political *mitingi*, as they are called here, swept Moscow during the unusually mild days leading up to the March 26 elections for a new Congress of Peoples' Deputies. Impassioned discussions in musty auditoriums, typically beginning with speeches by celebrity intellectuals and followed by questions from overflow audiences, have been a growing feature of *perestroika* and *glasnost* since 1985, but they acquired new intensity from two recent developments.

One was the elections, the country's first multi-candidate national ballot in more than sixty years. Candidates running for Moscow's share of the 2,250 seats were given broad access to local newspapers, radio and television, but the campaign was at its most electrifying in the scores of meetings between candidates and voters throughout the city.

The other driving force behind the *mitingi* was the inaugural conference of the Memorial Society, on January 28. Memorial was begun in 1987 by young people gathering signatures on petitions calling for a monument to Stalin's victims. Harassed and in some cases arrested by local authorities, Memorial's initiators first got support from prominent members of Moscow's intelligentsia and then, this past July, from Mikhail Gorbachev, who endorsed their call for a monument at the 19th Party Conference. The society was especially active around March 5, the thirty-sixth anniversary of Stalin's death.

Anti-Stalinism was the main theme of the epidemic of Moscow *mitingi*,
(Continued on Page 522)



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NO CHOICE

The polite applause offered by pundits here for the Soviet elections was tempered by a self-righteous cynicism. *The New York Times* griped that many Soviet candidates were "virtually indistinguishable" and "conventional contenders were often "filtered out." *The Washington Post* carped that "the old ways persist in some districts." A TV anchor in the capital sneered that Soviet citizens were participating in a "form" of elected government. Scribblers and talking heads noted repeatedly that a quarter of the contests had only one candidate.

Meanwhile, back in the Land of the Free: Last year, 20 percent of the races for seats in the House of Representatives were uncontested. In Louisiana, truly a one-party state, seven of eight House seats had one aspirant. In Texas, voters in thirteen out of twenty-seven districts had a one-candidate option. And more than 98 percent of House members and 85 percent of Senators who ran for re-election in 1988 won—giving Americans a collection of politicians not widely known to be unconventional contenders.

Nor is this freedom of no choice limited to Congress. A 1986 study found that in several states more than half the legislature races offered only one nominee, many of whom had escaped a primary. At least Soviet citizens could vote to reject an unopposed candidate. So, the Russians experiment with democracy; here we let it ossify.

All governments warrant the skepticism of journalists. Certainly the Communist Party controlled much of the Soviet elections, and the process was hardly designed to undercut Mikhail Gorbachev. But the U.S. media's doubt is strictly selective and rarely applied to the Democratic and Republican oligopoly that produces our homogenized politics. The nation would be far better off if its media were as critical of U.S. elections as they are of the Soviet Union's.

THE THIRD WORLD WAR

Alexander Cockburn

THE PAPAL SPIDERWEB—II

Penny Lernoux

DISARMING IN EUROPE

John Tirman

'THE ERRORS OF SOCIALISM'

Robert Heilbroner

WHAT'S COOKIN'

Anne Mendelson

RUSHDIE IN MONTANA

Randy Cohen

LETTERS.

SLIMED

New Haven, Conn.

Alexander Cockburn is not one of my favorite writers in *The Nation*. I believe the venom that goes along with his leftism is not helpful to the left. Even when one agrees with him, his snarling tone causes uneasiness. However, his attack on Irving Howe ("Howe is by far the slimier. . .") ["Beat the Devil," March 6] is outrageous. Howe may not be the radical some of us would like him to be, but on no account should he be subjected to this abuse in *The Nation*. It is noteworthy that Cockburn quotes an egregious paragraph from a letter by Ruth Wisse that was published in what he makes sure to tell us is "Howe's *Dissent*," but he doesn't add that Howe himself, in a reply, disapproved of her sentiments. Because he does not mention Howe's disapproval in this instance, a reader may suppose that Howe had agreed with her views. Now that's slimy. *Sid Resnick*

ABUSED AND CONFUSED

Ithaca, N.Y.

How disappointing it was to read Alexander Cockburn's column of November 21, 1988, on human rights abuses in the Israeli-occupied territories. Cockburn expresses dismay at the failure of mainstream publications to report the unpleasant and shocking stories of the *intifada*, but he proposes to remedy this lamentable state of affairs by publishing a column consisting of distortions and rote name-calling.

I spent last summer working as a research assistant to M.K. Dedi Zucker of the Citizen's Rights Party, collecting information on the atrocities occurring within the occupied territories. There are enough unreported abuses perpetrated daily in the West Bank and Gaza that Cockburn should not have had to resort to filling up space with statements such as that in *Ansar III* the prisoners "have barely enough water to survive."

I spoke to a number of Palestinians who had been incarcerated there during the summer months, and although conditions at the prison are far from optimal the prisoners are not being denied either food or water.

Thanks to Cockburn's diligent redigestion of baseless allegations, the American left now has the "legitimized" story of the Ramallah "wailing wall." This bloody wall was duly reported by the Israeli journalists months ago, and an investigation was opened by the military police to check possible excesses committed there by soldiers, and indeed if the blood there was human, or was blood at all. The investigation yielded no evidence that this was a site of torture or slaughter of Palestinians.

There is also no evidence of Palestinians being tortured or interrogated with injections or, as this incident was reported in *The Jerusalem Post*, *Ha'aretz* and *Hadashot*, si-

multaneously threatened with a butcher knife. The allegation was not repeated.

Cockburn forthrightly comes out and says with wonderfully righteous, privileged Protestant outrage that the Israeli mentality "sponsoring these torments" is "racist." In the one apparently undistorted example of these torments, he gives *Nation* readers a "critical" account of the shooting of Mohammed Abu-Aker "on a quiet day in August." In all my solidarity visits to the West Bank with the Israeli protest movement Dai L'Kibush (Enough of the Occupation) during the month of August, I never witnessed a "quiet day." A population united against a military occupation is hardly going about its daily business. National resistance is a full-time job.

Does the application of the label "racism" to the all-encompassing paranoia that Jewish Israelis suffer in their relations with Arabs aid Cockburn in his feeble understanding of Jewish-Arab interpersonal dynamics?

It is sometimes hard to find a common, solid ground as human beings when one is caught in the midst of historical, cultural, linguistic and political conflicts. However, anyone who has spent a significant amount of time in Israel knows that in spite of these systemic difficulties Jews and Arabs are not in constant conflict. One doesn't have to go to the peace village Neve Shalom or hang out with the young people of R'out ("Friendship," a Jewish-Arab youth movement) to find Jews and Arabs living together with a degree of mutual respect. Because of this, there remains hope that once the condition of Palestinians is normalized, Israeli Arabs will attain equal status within Israeli society.

Meanwhile, the abuses of human rights in the occupied territories are numerous and institutionalized; Israeli Arabs suffer countless indignities each day. Cockburn's uninformed tirade contributes nothing to remedying this situation. Fortunately, Israeli journalists have demonstrated not only compassion for Palestinian suffering but a sense of responsibility toward their profession. There have also emerged in Israel citizens' organizations staffed by Arab and Jewish volunteers who work not only to provide legal aid but to give Palestinians a voice, to record the history of the uprising and to convey this information to the Israeli public. The two most outstanding of these organizations are Sovlanut, a legal clinic under the management of Yossi Shvartz, and the Israeli protest movement Dai L'Kibush.

Dai L'Kibush is fighting for the creation of a Palestinian state under Palestinian-elected leadership, within the framework of an international conference. Throughout the entire period of the *intifada* the group has organized visits to the West Bank to express human and political solidarity with the Palestinians. These visits exemplify the group's belief in direct communication between the

two peoples and their commitment to the principle that through Palestinian liberation, Israelis will also be freed. Honestly, I'm not sure how this group functions in Cockburn's "fascist or at least pre-fascist" Israel.

Recently, an Israeli soldier from the crack Golani division that has played a disproportionate role in suppressing the uprising stated on Israeli radio that he preferred to return to Lebanon rather than continue to serve in the territories. "In Lebanon, at least I had an enemy to fear. In the territories I am afraid of myself."

One hopes that the confusion and revulsion expressed in this statement, which I found in all sectors of Israeli society, will gel into an effective opposition for peace under the expected barbarism of the new Israeli government. The Israeli left deserves our support, our steadfast opposition to U.S. "Middle East policy" as envisioned by George Bush and a continuing critique of the distorted mainstream media coverage of the "Arab-Israeli" conflict. *Elise Ackerman*

COCKBURN REPLIES

Aptos, Calif.

Maybe "slimier" was wrong. I thought about it for a while. "Stoat-like," "squalid," "weasel-brained" were all ascriptions jostling forward, but in the end I thought "slimy" properly evoked the eel-like slipperiness of Howe. As I told *Nation* readers back on December 26, 1987, Howe was the man who, as editor of *Dissent*, printed Alfred Kazin's description of me as a "Jew hater" while later privately confiding to a colleague that it was wrong to have permitted this description but that since it was Kazin's first piece for *Dissent*, he did not feel like interfering. If Resnick has got a better word than "slimy" I'll be glad to entertain it for future use. All this is on the level of personal biography. Maybe soon, in the slow summer months, I'll give the more spacious world-historical reasons for such descriptions of Howe. I must say I missed his reply to Wisse, but I now see that he did manage a sentence in riposte to her ravings, which she opened by comparing me to Stalin. Howe did not see fit to correct that ascription either. I'm sure Resnick wrote to *Dissent* with all the proper reproaches.

As for Ackerman, her arguments seem to derive less from political slipperiness than from plain stupidity, though steady toil in the fields of equivocation may in future win her a place in the less forgivable camp of the former. Listen to her. Prison conditions are "far from optimal" but prisoners are not dropping dead of dehydration. "Abuses" of Palestinians occur daily but a bloodied wall doesn't square with the military's "investigation." "Atrocities" have occurred but torture by injection is unthinkable. Violations of human rights are "numerous and institutionalized." *(Continued on Page 535)*

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EDITORIALS.

All Together Now

In confusing times like these, the symptoms of change can be hard to interpret, and news, whether good or bad, can sometimes arrive in unfamiliar packaging. Does the much-lauded bipartisan agreement on Nicaragua, which renews "nonlethal" aid to the *contras* for at least another eight months, qualify as good news? At any

point in the past eight years, the answer would have been no—unhesitatingly. Even a penny more to Reagan's armies of the night was anathema. But today some hesitation may be in order. The accord is probably the best that we can hope for from a Bush Administration. For the *contras*, it looks less like a kiss of life than a shot of embalming fluid. And if the money allows them to spend the next eight months in camp doing push-ups and playing softball while the United States figures out how to dispose of them in the

longer term—well, better that than having them run around Honduras raping, pillaging and dealing crack.

Having said that, the agreement is no enlightened act of statesmanship. The Bush Administration was bowing to insuperable operational difficulties rather than discovering moral principles. The accord flouts the desire of the region's leaders, expressed in the February El Salvador summit, that the *contras* be disbanded, and even leaves open the sinister prospect that they could be reactivated as a fighting force. The terms of debate over Central America have come through the process largely intact: We still see a malignancy "down there," Washington is saying, but we'll abandon major surgery and stick the patient in the isolation ward instead.

With the end of the Reagan Administration, we have entered an interesting interregnum. The United States has been forced to confront the limits of its power in Central America while refusing to abandon the pretension that it can act as the moral arbiter of all life to the south. The result of this is confusion and concealed retreat. Under Reagan, declining power hid itself behind smoke and mirrors; today it hides behind that most ancient of American foreign policy rituals, the bipartisan consensus.

The new Administration's drift is best symbolized by the continued delay in appointing an Assistant Secretary of State to oversee Latin American policy, which leaves us with Elliott Abrams, who still inhabits the talk shows and Op-Ed pages like an especially noxious incubus. The testy exchanges between Jim Baker, White House Counsel C. Boyden Gray and Chief of Staff John Sununu are a barometer of the bureaucratic disorder that reigns under Bush. For conservatives, they also signal larger constitutional matters. The powers granted under the *contra* agreement to no less than four Congressional committees is, for those who chatter in the corridors of the Heritage Foundation, another galling surrender to the encroachment of the legislative branch on the authority of the President.

But who needs the paranoia of the far right, which gave us the *contra* debacle in the first place? The bipartisan agreement over Nicaragua is probably better understood as a laborious rite of passage, a way station in the larger foreign-policy transition that is so urgently needed. Jim Baker is said to have devoted forty hours of personal lobbying time to securing the *contra* aid deal. It would be nice now if he could spend even forty minutes thinking about Third World debt, or the Brazilian rain forest, or European arms reduction, or the Sino-Soviet rapprochement—or indeed any of the dozens of other changes afoot in a world that threatens to leave the United States behind for good.

Preventive . . .

Filiberto Ojeda Rios is committed to Puerto Rican independence. He is also committed to the Metropolitan Correctional Center in New York City, charged with resisting arrest in 1985 in connection with his indictment as an alleged co-conspirator in a Hartford robbery that netted an estimated \$7.2 million. Except

for about three months almost a year ago, he has been held without bail in preventive detention for more than three years. Ojeda's real offense is his leadership of Los Macheteros, a clandestine revolutionary group dedicated to achieving independence for Puerto Rico.

Ojeda was arrested in Puerto Rico on August 30, 1985, in a sweeping roundup of *independentistas* and respected cultural figures, such as the poet Coqui Santaliz, an action apparently intended to send the message that merely advocating independence is a criminal act. The sweep resembled a paramilitary operation: Ojeda was seized in a frightening predawn raid on his home in Luquillo by dozens of F.B.I. agents in combat uniform supported by hovering helicopters. Ojeda, who had survived a period of violent repression of *independentistas* by what people call a death squad operating within the Police Department of Puerto Rico, defended himself for almost two hours before negotiating the safe passage of his wife and surrendering. Both Ojeda and F.B.I. agents fired shots during the standoff, and an agent was wounded by a bullet that apparently ricocheted off a wall.

The U.S. government treated Ojeda as both a political prisoner and a common criminal. He was taken to the private office of San Juan F.B.I. director Richard Held for an extended political discussion about the status of Puerto Rico and the role of the F.B.I., which *independentistas* believe tutored the death squad. He was then taken to Hartford, despite legal motions requesting that his trial be held in Puerto Rico, where the alleged conspiracy occurred and where a jury would understand the language in which the evidence would be given and would not be prejudiced against Puerto Ricans.

After Ojeda had spent thirty-two months and twenty days in prison, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit finally ordered his release, finding that "due process can tolerate no further detention." Once freed, Ojeda had to wear an electronic anklet that permitted the F.B.I. to trace his movements at all times. He was under house arrest from 8 P.M. to 7 A.M., confined to Hartford, required to live in his lawyer's apartment and to report daily to the courthouse. He was denied permission to leave Hartford on the two occasions he requested: to testify before the U.N. Decolonization Committee in New York City and to receive a human rights award from the City University of New York law school.

Ojeda complied fully with these oppressive bail conditions, but on the ninety-eighth day of his "freedom" he was arrested anew by the F.B.I. as he entered the Hartford courthouse, taken before a Federal magistrate and belatedly charged with resisting arrest in 1985. Ojeda was again denied bail and incarcerated at the Navy base at Roosevelt Roads in Puerto Rico in an eight-by-eight-foot cell where the temperature averaged more than 90 degrees—despite the fact that he had recently undergone triple-bypass surgery. Upon hearing testimony from the president of the Association of Cardiologists of Puerto Rico that Ojeda was at mortal risk, the Federal magistrate ordered him transferred to the base hospital. He was placed in a segregated wing, chained to the bed and guarded by Federal marshals. Ojeda

began a hunger strike and was immediately transferred to the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan, where he was kept in isolation. Only after many letters of protest, including one from Amnesty International, to U.S. Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, was his treatment in jail normalized.

Recently I visited Ojeda in prison and was impressed by his scholarly dignity and the depth of his political convictions. Because of their respect and affection, other prisoners look to him for leadership. He does not eschew armed struggle as a way of pursuing independence, but his underground movement, Los Macheteros, avoids terrorism and rejects any violence toward civilians.

Independentistas, the Bar Association of Puerto Rico and broad sectors of Puerto Rican society have for many years asserted that Federal jurisdiction over the island is in violation of international law. Specifically, they point to 1898, when Spain "ceded" Puerto Rico to the United States as the spoils of war. The year before, Spain had signed a Charter of Autonomy, pledging to take no action affecting the political status of the island without first obtaining the consent of the people. *Independentistas* argue that the United States also is bound by the charter.

President Bush said in February that he has "long believed that the people of Puerto Rico should have the right to determine their own political future," and he called on Congress to pave the way for a referendum. This willingness to put Puerto Rican self-determination on the political agenda is welcome. It can never be taken seriously, however, unless Ojeda is freed and given a fair trial—and until the government's heavy-handed efforts to crush the *independentistas* are halted.

RICHARD FALK

Richard Falk, a member of The Nation's editorial board, is Albert G. Milbank Professor of International Law and Practice at Princeton University.

... Detention

Civil disobedience is a strange phenomenon, probably not clearly understood by anyone, whether law breaker or enforcer. Civil disobedience puts stress on the system, pushing out into a twilight zone between the order necessary to civilization and the inner peace necessary to the soul. When successful, it expands consciousness and conscience. Nothing is more revolutionary, and it is what is happening in our heartland, in central Missouri, where 150 intercontinental ballistic missiles lie buried in farmland, in empty-looking fenced-in corrals labeled L9 or G11, all part of what the Pentagon refers to as Whiteman Air Force Base.

A few weeks ago in Federal District Court in Kansas City, Judge Joseph Stevens Jr. sentenced a 64-year-old grandmother, Dorothy Jane Eber, to twenty-six months in prison, six months for each of four trespasses at missile sites and two months for refusing to answer questions. The next day, on February 16, a 51-year-old Franciscan priest, Father

Jerry Zawada, got twenty-five months, four months for each of six charges of trespass or breaking bond and one for contempt. (The priest's trespasses, it seems, carried only 67 percent the weight of the grandmother's.) Another defendant, Ariel Glenn, got nineteen months for three trespasses plus contempt, and Bonnie Urfer, co-director of Nuke-watch in Madison, Wisconsin, pleaded no contest, thus saving the government the expense of her trial. Still, she rated a six-month-per-trespass sentence. Dorothy Eber was fined \$2,100 for damaging what the government described as some two- or three-dollar padlocks and part of a chain link fence at the site. This was figured at \$500 per break-in plus a general \$25-per-incident levy. This past January on similar charges Duane Bean, Kathy Kelly and Gail Beyer were each given a one-year sentence (four trespasses at three months apiece) and fined between \$1,050 and \$2,625 by Federal Magistrate Calvin Hamilton. Judge Hamilton apparently rated silo trespass half as heinous a crime as did Judge Stevens.

What had the defendants done at the missile sites? They had tied ribbons to the silo lids in a symbolic act to prevent their opening, erected signs—"Farms Not Arms," for example—and strewn flower seeds and corn kernels. They called themselves the Missouri Peace Planters. Some 150 of them had started out by occupying ten silo sites last fall. The Air Force sent the protesters "ban and bar" letters, forbidding them forever from entering Whiteman Air Force Base without permission. The Peace Planters who kept going back forced a decision from the government, one that led to their imprisonment.

But consciousnesses were raised. The sheriff refused an Air Force request to hold Kelly and Bean overnight in his jail and instead drove them to a restaurant to meet their friends. Two reporters for *The Clinton (Missouri) Daily Democrat* wrote that at first they had shared the general "anger that anyone would dare compromise the security of our Country by entering these prohibited areas." But after interviewing Bean and Father Zawada, the reporters found that "our 'hawk tail feathers' had either been inadvertently plucked or they had just plain molted and fallen out. . . . We were awakened to the presence of the nuclear death and destruction that literally resides at our very door steps, and the real need to begin somewhere to solve the situation."

Federal District Judge Stevens resolutely prevented any mention in the courtroom of the defendants' reasons for trespassing at the silos, or even of the relationship between nuclear missiles and future prospects of rabbits, meadow-larks and human beings. He told Dorothy Eber, "You are neither heroine nor martyr, you are a lawbreaker pure and simple. . . . You and others like you have appointed yourselves moralists for the world and give no quarter."

Four more of the Peace Planters are awaiting sentencing, and another four are scheduled for arraignment.

JAMES MUNVES

James Munves has written for The Nation on and off for almost four decades.

BEAT THE DEVIL.

Scenes From the Inferno

Back in January the soothsayers were agog with the news that capitalism had carried all before it, and that from Beijing to Brasilia the lines at lending libraries stretch round the block, citizens waiting for their turn at Milton Friedman, Von Hayek and the rest of the gang. I promised then that I would return to this matter of capitalist "victory," which more recently has had Venezuelans battling security forces to protest I.M.F.-ordered austerity, prompting previously hard-faced men at the U.S. Treasury to say, Yes, maybe it's time for a little debt relief.

The library lines may be long in Beijing, for reasons best known to the world's oldest civilization, but round the mostly capitalist Third World, the news is not good. It's not good for the poor in the First World either. In fact most everywhere you look outside the upper-middle-class citadels of the capitalist heartland in the United States, Western Europe and Japan, the news is bad, as scrutiny of such sources as World Bank reports, UNICEF's "The State of the World's Children," Walden Bello's *Brave New Third World? Strategies for Survival in the Global Economy* (published by Food First) and Susan George's *A Fate Worse Than Debt* makes very clear. Study these materials, but also trust the evidence around you. The refugees pouring into the United States from shattered and debt-burdened economies in Latin America, Africa and Europe—notably Ireland—tell the story.

Over the past decade Latin America and Africa have by far suffered the most. The Brazilian socialist leader "Lula" has graphically defined the situation:

I will tell you that the Third World War has already started—a silent war, not for that reason any the less sinister. This war is tearing down Brazil, Latin America and practically all the Third World. Instead of soldiers dying there are children, instead of millions of wounded there are millions of unemployed; instead of destruction of bridges there is the tearing down of factories, schools, hospitals and entire economies. . . . It is a war by the United States against the Latin American continent and the Third World. It is a war over the foreign debt, one which has as its main weapon interest, a weapon more deadly than the atom bomb, more shattering than a laser beam.

In Argentina, Venezuela and Peru per capita income is lower now than it was in 1970. In Mexico workers are earning 40 percent less than they did in 1980. One-third of the region's population, or about 130 million people, are living in extreme poverty. In Latin America as a whole—the biggest food exporter after the United States—25 million children are underfed. Try some specific cases:

The hut is sinking in the mud near the bridge over the River Guaibe in Porto Alegre, Brazil. A woman social worker is welcomed by five children, the oldest about 8 years old. The parents have gone out foraging in the garbage heaps. Noticing how poorly the children look, the social worker asks them whether they have eaten recently. "Yes, miss, yesterday Mummy made little cakes from wet newspapers." "What?

Little cakes from what?" asks the woman. "Mummy takes a sheet of newspaper, makes it into a ball and soaks it in water and when it is nice and soft kneads it into little cakes. We eat them, drink some water and feel nice and full inside."

Susan George quotes this story from the "Information Newsletter" of the Brazilian Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Brazil, home of the "economic miracle," is one of the most inegalitarian countries in the world, with the bottom 40 percent of the population taking home only 7 percent of the G.N.P. The purchasing power of the minimum salary has halved in the past fifty years. Two-thirds of the people are malnourished to varying degrees. In the northeast, one of the poorest regions in the hemisphere, starvation is endemic. In Chile, laboratory of "free market" policy, the Pinochet regime takes a creative approach to the statistics of hunger. Instead of measuring malnutrition in relation to a person's weight and age, as is usual, it looks at weight and height. So a stunted child is not counted as malnourished, and thus is not eligible for food supplements, because her weight falls within an acceptable range for her height. In the Santiago neighborhoods of Lo Hermida and José María Caro, a 1986 study by the Academy of Christian Humanism reports, the diet of 77 to 80 percent of the people does not have sufficient calories and proteins, by internationally established standards, to sustain life.

Now take the nightmare of Peru. Between 1972 and 1983 the number of malnourished children in the poorer neighborhoods of Lima increased from 24 percent to 36 percent. Between 1972 and 1979 daily calorie intake of the poor dropped from 1,900 to 1,500 calories, the latter being a starvation level rate. This is an average. In the Ayacucho area, now the stronghold of the Shining Path, the amount has dropped to 450 calories. "Peru supplies some of the most disgusting food stories I've ever heard," writes George. "There's Nicovita, a fish-meal flour used for fattening chickens, manufactured under extremely dubious sanitary conditions. The good news is that (at least in the late 1970s), a lot of Peruvian shanty-town dwellers were subsisting on Nicovita. The bad news is that, as the once finance minister, Silva Ruete, put it, 'They don't even have chicken feed to eat regularly.'" George reports that in 1981 Oscar Trelles, former president of the Peruvian Senate, declared that "it was healthier to eat less, that thin women were far more attractive than fat ones and that Jewish children who had gone hungry in the concentration camps had not become stupider as a result."

In Argentina the generals who seized power in 1976, and subsequently murdered some 15,000 of their fellow citizens, were devoted free-marketeers. They ran the economy to ruin. Hardly had the junta gained control when the I.M.F. rushed in with a \$290 million loan and an austerity program. As many as 200,000 public sector workers were laid off forthwith and the economy was rapidly privatized. Result: 28 percent of the inhabitants of Buenos Aires are malnourished, and almost half the population in the poorer northern prov-

ALEXANDER COCKBURN

inces suffer from hunger. More than 1 million children in the province of Buenos Aires don't have enough to eat. Adults fare little better. And as if President Alfonsín did not have enough problems making concessions to the frequent coup-plotters, his country is also saddled with immense debt. Try repairing an economy when 60 percent of your export earnings are sent North to pay off loans.

Lie Down in Darkness

Economically the African continent is in a state of virtual collapse. From the early to mid-1980s twenty African nations had economies that remained stagnant or declined. Per capita gross domestic product in sub-Saharan Africa declined by 3.6 percent in the first half of this decade, by 0.5 percent in 1986 and by 5.1 percent in 1987. The World Bank, noted for the optimism of its assumptions in this regard, reckons that per capita G.D.P. there in 1995 will be less than it was in 1973. So not only have twenty-two years been wasted but de-development has occurred.

Something is known of the situation of South Africa's black millions shackled in capitalist apartheid, but consider the less-discussed story of Zaire, ruled for twenty-three years by Mobutu, a man installed by and congenial to Western capitalist interests. As George remarks, "It's hard to imagine a country with greater natural resources—or in worse shape." Eight out of ten Zairians live in absolute poverty; real wages are a tenth of what they were at independence, in 1960; and in some places half the children die before they reach the age of 5. In 1986 the country's external debt was \$5 billion, which by some accounts is the same amount that Mobutu and his family have stolen from the country. Last year in a piece of genial African rococo *The New York Times* portrayed citizens as they "look forward to the inauguration . . . of the first Coca-Cola bottling plant in Equateur Province," and Mobutu as his "liveried waiters served roast quail on Limoges china and poured Loire Valley wines, properly chilled against the equatorial heat." Invisible were people like those described by a Belgian volunteer whom George quotes: "I saw a little girl eating grass and another one who was eating the waste from the brewery. She was scooping it up to take some home. She told me she hadn't eaten for three days."

Nigeria was always supposed to be a beacon of achievement. Between 1985 and 1987 its per capita income was more than halved, from \$800 to \$380. As a result the World Bank revised its classification of Nigeria, from a middle-income to a low-income country. Kenya is under I.M.F. supervision, an official from the fund ensconced in the country's central bank in Nairobi, where he can make all crucial decisions. The country has been under I.M.F. surveillance since 1975, with consequent policies a disaster. Between 1975 and 1984 the minimum wage—a rough measure of the fate of the poor—declined by 42 percent. Health? A government survey in 1982 found that 28 percent of the children were stunted as a result of poor nutrition, up by 4 percent from

1977. Nearly half the children surveyed had been sick within the previous two weeks.

The Ideology of No Ideology

These are scenes from the inferno. We pass from them to the judicious sentiments of well-fed First World observers. Back on January 29, in a column titled "The End of Ideology," Anthony Lewis reproached Jesse Jackson for telling a crowd in Zambia that I.M.F. men are "slave masters." Lewis said that with respect to Africa the I.M.F.'s "disciplined advice has value," in contrast to "the exhaustion of Marxism." Jackson's description was entirely appropriate. In the three years that followed the "debt crisis" in 1982 more than one hundred I.M.F. loan agreements were put in place in the Third World. Structural Adjustment Facilities, new projects to realign economies through the joint efforts of the I.M.F. and the World Bank, had by mid-1988 entrapped almost thirty of the world's poorest countries, the majority in Africa. According to Walden Bello, "It is no exaggeration to say that under the guise of providing aid, an IMF-World Bank condominium has been imposed over much of sub-Saharan Africa. . . . in 1986 and 1987 the net transfer of resources from sub-Saharan Africa to the IMF was close to \$1 billion."

It was ideology in the form of laissez-faire economics that disposed the British to allow a million people to die in Ireland in the great famine of 1845. It is ideology today that prompts the I.M.F. to impose the export strategies and austerity programs that shrink domestic consumption, eviscerate public services and leave the elite untouched.

On average over the past decade the Third World has exported to the First about \$20 billion a year; \$43 billion in 1988. This is the ideology-in-action of the world's capitalist powers. So what are the strategies of such a system's apologists? First, they argue that Third World countries are in trouble because they don't have truly free capitalist economies and need the cauterizing discipline of the "free market." But these countries have private ownership and operate under the aegis of the I.M.F.; any state intervention is of the capitalist variety. Second, the apologists claim that given full play, "free market" strategies have worked or are working. They rejoice in the "reformed" China, where child slave labor, corruption, widening income differentials, immense social dislocation, have come hand in hand with economic "freedom." They extol Chile, where the minimum wage, which in 1971 could buy 313 kilograms of bread each month, now buys only 85 kilograms a month, and where 46 to 48 percent of the population lives in poverty. As I suggested at the start, when it comes to the matter of whether capitalism is "winning," trust the evidence of your senses. Look at the miserable shacks in the *compamentos* on the edges of Santiago. Or the *favela* Rocinha, sprawling up a hillside not 200 yards from the high-rise residential fortresses of Rio de Janeiro's middle class. Or the bodies bundled in niches on New York's streets and lodged amid the bushes under the Los Angeles freeways. This is victory?

BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN AND JEFFERSON MORLEY

■ From Meese to the U.N.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee should take a good look at John Bolton, the nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, a position in which he would, among other things, act as a liaison between the U.S. government and the United Nations. Currently Assistant Attorney General in the Justice Department's civil division, Bolton was known to be one of Edwin Meese 3d's most loyal lieutenants. At Justice, Bolton developed a reputation for combativeness. When he attacked the independent counsel law, even a White House spokesman accused him of being "intemperate."

Bolton's record as Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legislative Affairs in 1986 and 1987 merits special scrutiny. He "tried to torpedo" Senator John Kerry's inquiry into allegations of *contra* drug smuggling and gunrunning, one committee aide says. When Kerry requested information from the Justice Department, Bolton's office gave it the long stall, a Kerry aide notes. In fact, says another Congressional aide, Bolton's staff worked actively with the Republican senators who opposed Kerry's efforts.

In 1986 this chum of Meese also refused to give Peter Rodino, then chair of the House Judiciary Committee, documents concerning the Iran/*contra* scandal and Meese's involvement in it. Later, when Congressional investigators were probing charges that the Justice Department had delayed an inquiry into gunrunning to the *contras*, Bolton was again the spoiler. According to Hayden Gregory, chief counsel of a House Judiciary subcommittee on crime, Bolton blocked an arrangement by which his staff had agreed to let House investigators interview officials of the U.S. Attorney's office in Miami. Bolton refused to speak to us on the subject.

Last year *Legal Times* reported that Bolton, who earned \$330,000 in 1984 as a partner at a blue-blood D.C. law firm, had contacted several private firms hoping to parlay his government experience into a lucrative lobbying job. None were interested in a tainted Meese disciple. Fortunately for him, George Bush and James Baker are less discriminating.

■ As the Canal Turns

George and Manuel go way back. When George ran the C.I.A., he met with Manuel, then a rising star in intelligence and drug-dealing circles. Years later both supported the *contras*. There was a falling out, but George and Manuel are still tied together by history and the Panama Canal. The Panama Canal treaties set up a schedule for the United States to pass control of the waterway to Panama, and Panama is due to appoint an administrator of the canal by the year's end. Manuel obviously will have a say in this. Therein lies a headache for George.

Conservatives, who lost the first Battle of the Canal, are licking their lips. The appointment is the wedge they need to reopen the issue of who controls the canal. Citing Noriega's contacts with drug dealers and Cuba—they neglect to mention Oliver North—they have begun to call for the abrogation of the treaties. "Bush will be profoundly tested by the

right-wing backlash in Congress and throughout the nation," says Larry Birns, executive director of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs. "With the decline of the *contras* as a viable cause, aborting the treaties will become the new messianic cause of the right." One conservative group, the American Defense Institute, has initiated a national fundraising drive on the canal issue. Writing for the International Freedom Foundation, retired Air Force Col. Samuel Dickens has even called for a U.S. military strike against Noriega.

Bush's best bet, says Birns, will be to work quietly behind the scenes with other users of the canal, including the Russians, to find an honest Panamanian acceptable to Noriega. Still, the right will have an easy time linking any Panamanian to the sleazy Noriega, thus bolstering their campaign to keep the canal. If Bush opposes the conservatives—and he can argue that squashing the treaties will only generate support in Panama for Noriega the "nationalist"—he will find himself on the same side as his old ally, perhaps reviving a once-beautiful friendship.

■ Winners and Losers in Drug Capitalism

Who's winning the war on drugs? The Federal Reserve has thoughtfully provided one answer.

Banks in southern Florida generated a cash surplus of some \$6.4 billion in 1988, up from \$3.3 billion in 1978, according to figures obtained from the Fed. The vast majority of this cash comes to Florida as payment for drugs, according to Robert Stankey, a former Treasury Department analyst who started compiling currency surplus figures in 1979. The winners of drug capitalism are the bankers who handle this booming commerce with little threat of being punished by the law. Drug shah William Bennett has thus far concentrated his attention only on the losers in drug capitalism, i.e., young male African-Americans, by declaring Washington a "drug trafficking crisis area."

■ C.I.A. for the Defense

Guillermo Tabraue is another winner of sorts. A Bay of Pigs veteran, he is charged with running a profitable drug syndicate in Miami for a decade with his son. He also received \$1,400 a week from the C.I.A. Tabraue was employed, according to his onetime handler at the agency, to provide information about drug trafficking among Bay of Pigs veterans. He was a well-placed source. The syndicate, which Federal prosecutors say operated first out of Tabraue's jewelry store and later out of son Mario's exotic-animal business, earned \$75 million between 1976 and 1987 importing marijuana and cocaine. All this came to light in Federal District Court in Miami, where the Tabraues and nine of their associates were being tried for drug racketeering. Mario was convicted on 61 charges in February, but the last-minute revelations of the former C.I.A. agent caused Judge James Kehoe to order Guillermo a separate trial. That one is scheduled to begin April 3, when Tabraue will again argue that the C.I.A. knew what he was doing.

ARTICLES.

■ THE PAPAL SPIDERWEB—II

A Reverence for Fundamentalism

PENNY LERNOUX

Religious fundamentalists usually bring to mind well-known stereotypes—Jim and Tammy Bakker pleading poverty from their multimillion-dollar home or Pat Robertson ordering a hurricane to retreat. Yet fundamentalism is not limited to the Bible Belt, a particular kind of Protestantism or a single country, as shown by its upsurge in Iran and Israel. The most powerful fundamentalist of them all, at least in terms of the number of followers he commands, is not the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini or an American evangelical but Pope John Paul II, leader of the Catholic world. A throwback to the 1950s, before the reforms undertaken by the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II), the Polish Pontiff has the same characteristics as those of Moslem, Jewish and Protestant fundamentalists, including a reverence for authority and a fear of secularization—or “secular humanism,” as the Vatican and U.S. evangelicals call it. Like his counterparts in other religions, John Paul insists that his church alone possesses the truth. “To deserve the name at all,” the Pope told a Polish audience, “a civilization must be a Christian civilization.” He has also aligned himself with the political right, another characteristic of religious fundamentalists.

Although much was made of President Ronald Reagan’s ties to Jerry Falwell and other Protestant fundamentalists, the Pope actually did more to further the Republican cause by disciplining Reagan’s most outspoken Catholic critics and throwing the church’s institutional weight behind groups identified with U.S. interests, such as anti-Sandinista Catholics in Nicaragua. While John Paul has followed his own agenda, which is primarily concerned with re-establishing Vatican authority over local churches, Rome’s interests have frequently coincided with those of the White House, producing a “parallelism in viewpoints,” to quote Archbishop Pio Laghi, the Vatican’s Ambassador to the United States. At the same time, U.S. Catholic fundamentalists played a key role in providing the church with the means to attack Reagan’s domestic critics, such as the “peace” bishops who in the early 1980s persuaded the Catholic hierarchy to write a pastoral letter that challenged Washington’s nuclear arms buildup.

An important figure in the fundamentalist Catholic cause is Paul Weyrich, a founder of the New Right who was influ-

ential in advancing Falwell’s career and who is credited with coining the phrase “Moral Majority.” Weyrich also helped found the Heritage Foundation with the financial aid of Joseph Coors, the ultraconservative vice chair of the Coors brewery and an adviser to President Reagan. Heritage, the first and most influential of the New Right think tanks, was for several years directed by Frank Shakespeare, a friend of Reagan’s and U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican. Like John Paul, Weyrich is a pre-Vatican II Catholic who wants to resurrect a religion based on absolutism and infallible certitudes. He objected to the bishops’ discussing the nuclear arms issue, which was not, he said, a proper subject for religious consideration. Nor did he agree with liturgical and other reforms in church ritual and administration. Working with the archconservative Minnesota-based newspaper *The Wanderer*, Catholics United for the Faith and other fundamentalist groups, Weyrich encouraged U.S. Catholics to complain to Rome about such activists as Seattle’s Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen, who supported the Sanctuary movement and opposed U.S. arms policies. To teach Catholics how to turn the screws, Weyrich organized the Washington-based Catholic Center, which sent “truth squads” backed by Coors money to organize workshops in Seattle and other cities with progressive bishops. But the emphasis was always on the religious not the political side: Hunthausen and others like him had scandalized the faithful by allowing homosexuals to sponsor masses—they were poisoning the minds of the flock; they were destroying the church. Weyrich stressed the importance of “labeling the opposition, putting them in a box and telling others that the opposition is composed of people who do not follow the Pope.”

The tactic paid off because John Paul’s papacy is “constitutionally disposed,” in the words of an American Jesuit with long experience in Rome, to believe such smears. Because of their respect for pluralism and an openness to dialogue and innovation, the American bishops are viewed as “unruly” by the Curia Romana—in other words, they have not copied the Polish model of Catholicism, in which everyone follows the leader and no one dares dissent. Sharing John Paul’s distrust of democracy (of which he has had no experience), the Curia assumed that the truth squads’ accusations were correct without checking the facts (a common Vatican practice, according to many bishops).

In 1986 Hunthausen, who had been singled out for abuse by Weyrich, *The Wanderer* and other Catholic fundamentalists, was stripped of many of his powers, although the charges against him were untrue or exaggerated, or were common practice in U.S. churches, such as providing religious services for homosexuals. Bishop Walter Sullivan, of Richmond, Virginia, also a peace activist and likewise humiliated by Vatican disciplining, said publicly what many U.S. prelates privately admitted—that Hunthausen’s punishment “on ecclesiastical issues” made no sense unless it was related to the peace question, since many other dioceses followed similar religious practices. Hunthausen did not preside over a politically powerful see with millions of

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Catholics, nor was Seattle important to the Vatican's finances, compared with, say, Chicago or New York. His ecclesiastical positions made him vulnerable to Vatican discipline, and his stand on the nuclear issue assured that any moves the Vatican made against him would be endorsed in the United States by right-wing Catholics and powerful political and business interests—including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which had kept files on Hunt-hausen's antiwar activities.

A stream of important U.S. officials had visited the Vatican in the early 1980s, including President Reagan, Vice President George Bush, Secretary of State George Shultz, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and retired Gen. Vernon Walters, former deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency and at the time Reagan's roving ambassador. All or some may have questioned the bishops' pastoral letter on nuclear arms, which had caused considerable hand-wringing in the White House. In any case, Rome, by punishing Hunthausen, sent a warning to the U.S. bishops to pay more attention to spiritual matters and less to political ones, and at the same time gave the White House symbolic support in the controversy over the arms race. The Pope made a similar point on his visit to the United States in 1987 by ignoring the bishops' pastoral letter despite its historic significance. Edward Rowny, White House special adviser on arms control, could thus state that the Reagan Administration's defense policies were "in harmony" with the Pope's criteria but not with some positions adopted by the U.S. bishops.

John Paul proved equally helpful in Nicaragua by supporting Sandinista critics and thus furthering the *contra* cause. Not until the end of Reagan's second term did Vatican officials privately admit that it had been a mistake to depend on Washington to solve the church's problems in Nicaragua. Like the Reagan Administration, the Vatican believed Nicaragua was setting a bad example for the rest of Latin America. Not only had the Nicaraguans thrown off the gringo yoke; they were refusing to take orders from Rome. The specter of religion-fueled rebellion worried both power centers, which saw liberation theology as the wedge for Marxist revolution. In fact, most of the region's liberation theologies are not Marxist, but neither Washington nor Rome was inclined to waste time trying to distinguish one theology from another. One had only to look at Nicaragua, said the State Department and the Curia, to know what could happen elsewhere in Latin America.

In late 1986, when it had become clear that Washington would not succeed in overthrowing the Sandinistas, the Vatican belatedly initiated overtures to the revolutionary government. But while negotiations helped reduce tensions between church and state, John Paul remained convinced that Nicaragua would go the way of Poland. The Nicaraguan hierarchy refused to condemn the *contras*, and Managua's Cardinal, Miguel Obando y Bravo, actively continued to take their part.

Obando, who in 1985 was singled out for papal favor by becoming Central America's only cardinal, is the principal contact in the region for a network of right-wing religious organizations that have gained prominence during

John Paul's reign. Sharing an elitist world view and fundamentalist religious convictions, these groups have often worked together to achieve the Vatican's—and Washington's—objectives in Central America. They include:

§ Opus Dei, a fundamentalist lay movement founded in Spain and favored by the Pope [see Lernoux, "Opus Dei and the 'Perfect Society,'" April 10];

§ Communion and Liberation (C.L.), a more modern, Italian version of Opus that also enjoys papal support;

§ Knights of Malta, a 900-year-old chivalric order, members of which are drawn from the European aristocracy and the upper classes in North and South America;

§ Legatus, a Catholic club for American C.E.O.s at companies earning more than \$4 million annually;

§ Word of God, a U.S. variation of Opus Dei and C.L., and its international affiliate, Sword of the Spirit;

§ The Institute on Religion and Democracy (I.R.D.), a neoconservative group founded during Reagan's first term and dubbed "the official seminary of the White House" by its critics.

First on the scene in Nicaragua was Sword of the Spirit, which established a group in Managua in 1978, a year before the Sandinistas toppled the Somoza dictatorship. Its affiliate, Word of God, formed part of the fundamentalist Catholic revival in the United States in the 1960s, later evolving into a highly structured organization in which "shepherds" control all aspects of members' lives, much as Opus Dei does. Headquartered in Ann Arbor, Michigan, it has branches in various parts of the United States and works closely with the fundamentalist Franciscan University of Steubenville, in Ohio. Sword of the Spirit is active in several world hot spots, including the Philippines and South Africa. The Managua branch, which was formed by wealthy businessmen with the support of Cardinal Obando, soon attracted a Who's Who of Sandinista opponents. Internal Sword of the Spirit documents obtained by Michigan journalist Russ Bellant show that the aim of the group was to mobilize religious and political opposition to the revolutionary government. According to the documents, the Pope was to play a central part in stirring up Catholics during his visit to Nicaragua in 1983—a role he fulfilled, albeit with largely negative results, by shouting down Sandinista supporters during a huge open-air mass in Managua.

Among the Sword of the Spirit's recruits was Humberto Belli, an editor of the opposition *La Prensa* and a trusted associate of Obando, who was responsible for Belli's appointment in 1982 as a consultant to the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Believers. By that time Belli was also working with the I.R.D., board members of which included Catholic writer Michael Novak and Lutheran pastor Richard John Neuhaus. The I.R.D.'s goal was to gain religious support for Reagan's foreign policies, particularly in Central America. Belli was among several "stars" promoted by the institute in its campaign to portray the Sandinistas as godless Communists. Also part of the campaign, and closely associated with the I.R.D., were Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America (Prodemca), which funneled U.S. govern-

ment funds to the Nicaraguan opposition, and the James Madison Foundation, another neoconservative Catholic think tank. The foundation is headed by George Weigel, an academic version of Novak, and supported by Jeane Kirkpatrick's husband, Evron. Weigel is also a board member of the I.R.D. and the Puebla Institute. The latter was founded in Michigan in 1982 as a vehicle to distribute Belli's first book, *Nicaragua: Christians Under Fire*, which, according to former *contra* leader Edgar Chamorro, was conceived and funded by the C.I.A. [see Alexander Cockburn, "Beat the Devil," August 30, 1986, and "Letters," January 31, 1987]. Puebla's first directors were Word of God members, and it was through Word of God that Belli became an associate professor of sociology at the Franciscan University of Steubenville.

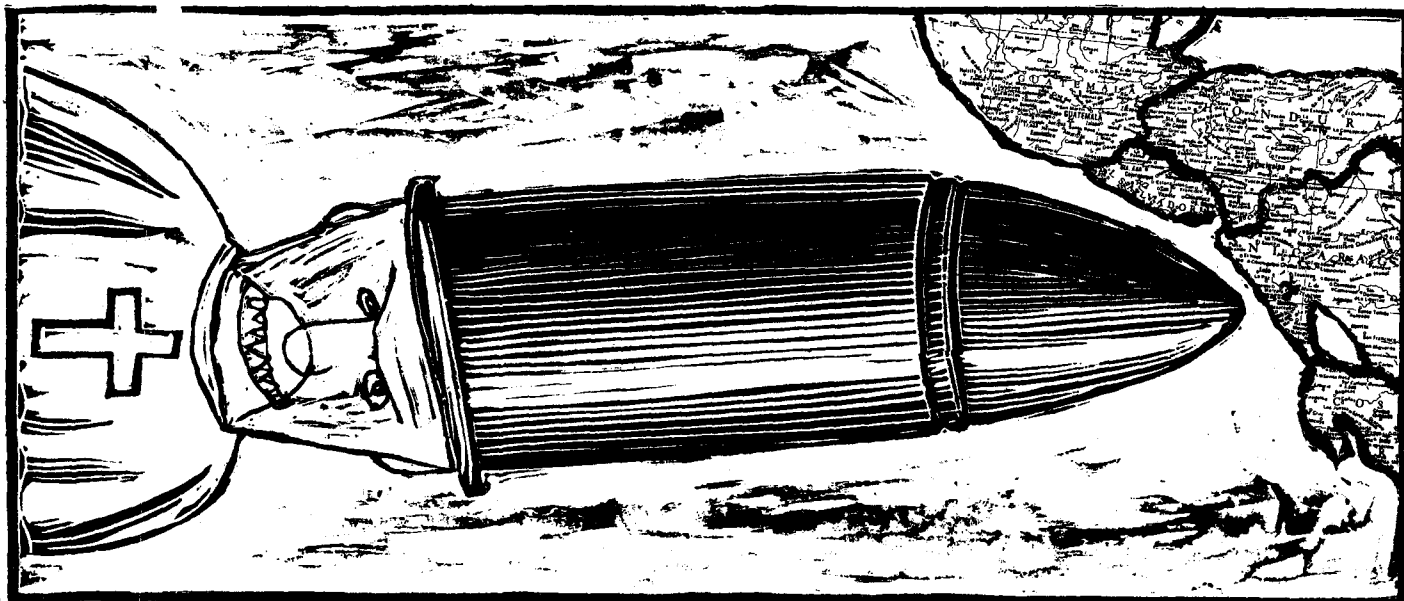
One of Word of God's most important backers is Michigan millionaire Thomas Monaghan, a fast-food entrepreneur, owner of the Detroit Tigers and a member of the board of trustees of the Franciscan University of Steubenville. Monaghan is also the founder of Legatus, the high-powered Catholic businessmen's club that has Vatican support and has attracted such influential millionaires as Lewis Lehrman, whose drugstore-chain fortune made him the moneybag of the New York Republican Party after Nelson Rockefeller's death; William Simon, Treasury Secretary under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford; and J. Peter Grace, head of the petrochemical giant W.R. Grace. Legatus's director, Marlene Elwell, was co-chair of the Michigan campaign for the Bush-Quayle ticket and, earlier, Midwest director for Pat Robertson's presidential campaign. Also a familiar figure in Legatus circles is the ubiquitous Paul Weyrich, which is not surprising in view of the organization's pet hates—secular humanism and liberation theology—which have frequently come under attack by Weyrich's fundamentalist followers.

Legatus's principal overseas interest is Honduras, headquarters of the *contras* and also a religious target of such Protestant fundamentalists as Pat Robertson and Jimmy Swaggart. Among the groups working with Legatus there

are the local branches of Sword of the Spirit and Opus Dei. Honduras is also much favored by the Knights of Malta, which channeled millions of dollars in supplies to the *contra* camps. Distribution was facilitated by the Knights' diplomatic privileges (the organization claims to be a sovereign state) and its Central American members, particularly Roberto Alejos, a wealthy Guatemalan sugar and coffee grower. The Knights' ambassador to Honduras, Alejos has had a relationship with the C.I.A. since 1960, when the agency used his estates to train Cubans for the Bay of Pigs invasion. Among the main promoters of such funding were former Treasury Secretary Simon, a Knight, and Grace, head of the American Association of the Knights.

Last January, following initiation ceremonies for new Knights and Dames at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, President Reagan was given the order's Collar of the Order of Merit "for his vigorous defense of the pro-life cause, and his strong support of traditional Christian family values." Among the new Knights present for the occasion were Monaghan and Ralph Martin, co-founder of Word of God.

On the surface, the activities of such groups seem concerned primarily with spreading the gospel of corporate business and helping Washington counter such subversive influences as the Sandinistas. More is involved, however, because the network has direct lines to the Vatican and the blessing of a fundamentalist Pope who exercises considerable power, particularly in predominantly Catholic regions like Central America. Another group the Pope relies on to spread his fundamentalist message is Communion and Liberation, a militant Italian Catholic movement that has gained influence in the right wing of the Christian Democrats and is a strong political force in northern Italy, particularly Milan. According to Stanislaw Grygiel, a Polish professor brought to Rome by John Paul and who forms part of his Polish court, C.L., Opus Dei and other such movements will provide the dedicated troops the Pope needs to refashion the Catholic Church in his own, fundamentalist image. Grygiel himself has carried that vision to the Franciscan University of Steubenville, where he has lectured with



DRAWINGS BY FRANCES JETTER

Word of God founder Martin and Humberto Belli. Word of God has also developed links with C.L. sponsors in the Curia, such as Bishop Paul Cordes, vice president of the Pontifical Council of the Laity, and Edouard Cardinal Gagnon, president of the Pontifical Council for the Family. Gagnon claims the Pope is about to add Word of God to his most favored list. The movement also has the support of Bernard Cardinal Law of Boston, a papal loyalist and, with New York City's John Cardinal O'Connor, the leader of the fundamentalist resurgence in the U.S. Catholic Church. (Both men are prominent members of the Knights of Malta and strong supporters of Cardinal Obando y Bravo.)

Although the I.R.D. has long had direct lines of communication with the Vatican and C.L. through Michael Novak and George Weigel, the Steubenville-Word of God connection indicates that the Vatican is moving beyond small circles of intellectuals to develop a larger base of right-wing lay movements with financial and political clout in order to pursue John Paul's geopolitical vision. Nicaragua remains a crucial element in the strategy because, unlike Cuba, it symbolizes Christian-Marxist cooperation in the world's most populous Catholic region. Some high-ranking Sandinista officials believe that the religious question could in the long run cause the government more damage than the *contras* inflicted, because it involves churches that affect Nicaraguan attitudes toward the Sandinistas and the government's image abroad.

Although the Vatican is willing to pretend neutrality as the price for maintaining a space in revolutionary Nicaragua, John Paul is as vehemently opposed to the Sandinistas as was President Reagan. Religious pressures will therefore continue. While the Pope possesses no divisions, as Stalin once sneered, he has in the emerging network of fundamentalist groups a formidable weapon that can funnel resources to Obando's church and, more important, keep up political pressure to isolate Nicaragua as an international pariah. President Bush may be more pragmatic in dealings with the Sandinistas—seeing will be believing—but if so, he will have to contend with a powerful religious lobby, including the Knights of Malta, which forms part of his own East Coast establishment.

Toward the end of Reagan's Administration officials of the Curia Romana took to ridiculing the "cowboy" Presi-

dent because of his crude power plays. Yet John Paul shares several characteristics with the former President, including a love of the theatrical and a mental fixity about the past. The main difference is that while Reagan's convictions are superficial, like the celluloid characters he once portrayed, the Pope's beliefs are deep-rooted, passionate and unmarred by doubt—the mark of the true fundamentalist. □

■ AN EARFUL IN CINCINNATI

Eavesdropping Left and Right

GREGORY FLANNERY

It is old news that Cincinnati is conservative. It is the town that raided *Oh! Calcutta* and took the local cable television company to task for carrying the Playboy channel. It is the home of Dr. Jack Willke, a national leader of the Right to Life movement, and the former home of Charles Keating, multimillionaire anti-porn crusader. Cincinnati is not a place where government eavesdropping would ordinarily cause much of a ripple. But even some of the city's more hidebound burghers have been expressing a certain dismay over unfolding disclosures that 1,500 or so of their fellow citizens have had their telephones tapped in recent years. That Myron Leistler, the city's retired "reform" Police Chief, confessed to being one of the perpetrators did not help calm the populace.

The phones allegedly tapped in the widespread scheme belonged to President Gerald Ford, Ohio Senator Howard Metzenbaum, three Federal judges and scores of local politicians, lawyers and journalists, as well as unions and businesses—including a major defense plant. The tappers found time to listen in on the Black Muslims and even managed to find the Weathermen. "The rights to privacy of the very powerful and of those relatively powerless were abridged," wrote Herbert Shapiro, a professor of history at the University of Cincinnati, in *The Cincinnati Enquirer*. "The facts already known suggest the hypothesis that a secret method of operation was set in place in Cincinnati which became a part of how the city's affairs were conducted."

At the center of this shadowy business is the telephone company, Cincinnati Bell, which is accused in a \$112 million class-action suit of selling information from the wiretaps. Just what information is unclear because most of the evidence in the case has been sealed by the court at Bell's request, a move unaccountably acquiesced in by the plaintiffs' lawyer. Meanwhile, a Federal grand jury has been looking into the allegations at least since last September, and *that* investigation is now under the scrutiny of the Public Integrity Section of the Justice Department, at the request of lawyers on both sides of the case. Not surprisingly, the Federal

Gregory Flannery, a reporter for the weekly Mt. Washington Press in Cincinnati, broke the story of the wiretap scandal.

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Bureau of Investigation can be found lurking in the background.

The wiretapping dates back to 1972, the heyday of such activity. Leonard Gates, a former installer and supervisor for Cincinnati Bell, has admitted to placing about 1,200 illegal wiretaps between that year and 1984. In Federal District Court hearings, in depositions and in documents submitted to the grand jury, Gates has testified that he was told to tap phones by the Cincinnati Police Division's intelligence unit and by security officers at Cincinnati Bell. Former Police Chief Leistler and three intelligence unit officers have confessed to ordering some of the taps.

Robert Draise, another former Bell telephone installer, has admitted to placing about 150 illegal taps between 1972 and 1979, also on the orders of the police and Cincinnati Bell. Draise says he gathered information about computer modems, fax machines and telephone lines at the jet engine test cells at the General Electric aircraft engine facility in Cincinnati. Gates has testified that he wiretapped the plant as well.

Both men have accused retired police Sgt. Jerry Berry and Cincinnati Bell security officer Peter Gabor of ordering them to place the illegal wiretaps. In addition, Gates accuses retired police Capt. Donald Byrd and Bell security coordinator James West of ordering him to install the unauthorized devices. West, Gabor and Cincinnati Bell have filed defamation suits against Gates and Draise, denying that they ever ordered or knew of illegal wiretapping. Berry and Byrd have admitted using illegal wiretaps while assigned to the police intelligence unit, starting in 1968.

In March Gates testified for the sixth time before the Federal grand jury, and the Cincinnati City Council has hired a private investigator to examine the allegations. But no one has sued the F.B.I. yet, even though it was that agency—which is charged with enforcing wiretap laws—that was allegedly behind some of the snooping. Written statements Gates has given Assistant U.S. Attorney Kathleen Brinkman finger the G-men.

Federal law requires a court order and the approval of the U.S. Attorney General or his designate for the use of a wiretap. Gates has testified that Richard Dugan, former president of Cincinnati Bell, told him the F.B.I. depended on the phone company for extralegal help. Gates said he approached Dugan after Bell security man West ordered him to wiretap U.S. District Court Judge Carl Rubin. "Jim West said that Mr. Rubin had been sick, and the F.B.I. needed him to retire or get out of his position. Jim said he was not doing the job and could hurt the F.B.I. Jim said he was a wild man in court," Gates said. "I talked with Mr. Dugan about this, and he said Mr. Rubin was a goddamned idiot." Gates says he accompanied West to the Federal courthouse to wiretap Rubin in 1979. A man West identified as F.B.I. Special Agent David Lichtenfeld was also in the building. Lichtenfeld has denied any involvement.

Cincinnati Police Sgt. Howard Cade, formerly assigned to the police intelligence unit, has also linked the F.B.I. to the wiretapping. Testifying under a grant of immunity from prosecution, Cade said that information obtained by the in-

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telligence unit was shared with the F.B.I., the Internal Revenue Service and the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. Last November U.S. District Court Judge S. Arthur Spiegel conducted a hearing into allegations of F.B.I. involvement. At issue was alleged misconduct in the prosecution of an automobile dealer, Robert Joseph, on charges of tax and loan fraud. Joseph pleaded guilty at the end of the hearing, but Spiegel found the wiretap testimony troubling. "This raises the issue, if true, that the U.S. Attorney and the F.B.I. tapped phones right and left," Spiegel said. "It raises the question of the validity of all prosecutions during the last ten years." The wiretap scandal also has touched on some other criminal cases. Convicted drug dealer James Craven and tax cheat Frank Rinaldi are among the targets identified by Gates and Draise and the now-retired intelligence cops who have confessed to illegal wiretapping.

But the great majority of taps claimed by Gates and Draise had no apparent link to law enforcement, whatever the F.B.I.'s role. Both men say they stopped tapping for the police and switched their services to Bell in 1975. The phone company ordered wiretaps as a proprietary venture, gathering and selling information, according to attorney Gene Mesh. The charge is part of Mesh's class-action suit on behalf of an unnamed group of 1,200 to 1,500 plaintiffs. Bell's security men also stand accused of listening in on City Council liberals and even some Republican stalwarts, such as Keating and county prosecutor Simon Leis, who closed down *Oh! Calcutta*. In 1979, Bell's West allegedly ordered a wiretap on lines serving vote-counting computers at the Hamilton County Board of Elections. As ballots were being tabulated on election night, the computer shut down for two hours. "About 8:30 . . . election evening, Mr. West called me," Gates says. "He said we had done something to screw

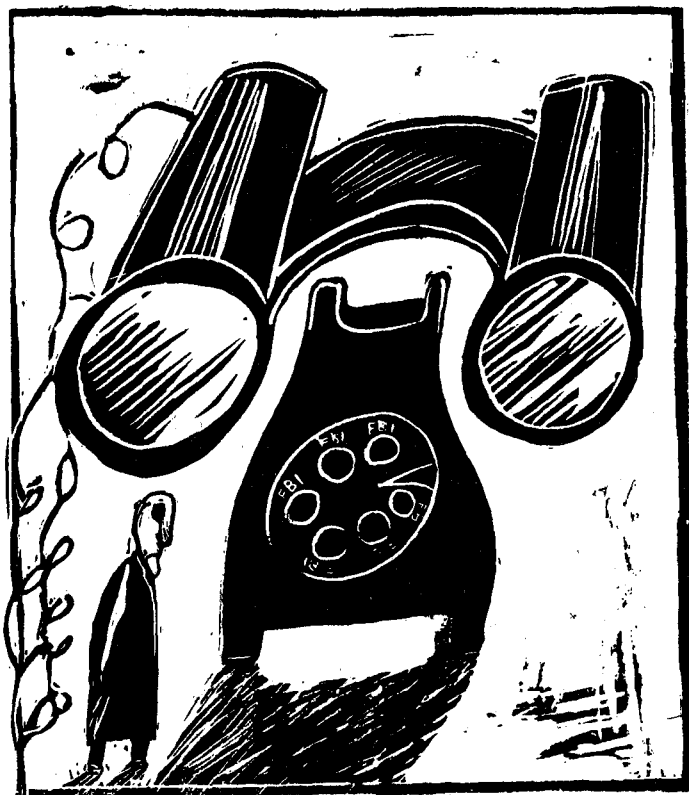
up the voting processor down there. He said, 'You must have done something wrong.'" Gates has testified that West told him the computer wiretap could be used to alter votes, but no evidence of such tampering has been produced so far. West allegedly ordered Gates to wiretap the Cincinnati Stock Exchange, the phones of Procter & Gamble executives and dozens of Cincinnati attorneys. Gates testified that West had him wiretap two boats and an airplane hangar belonging to financier Carl Lindner, head of American Financial Corporation. Joseph Yablonsky, a thirty-two-year veteran of the F.B.I. and a security director for a company Lindner owns, testified at the hearing for Joseph, the car dealer. Asked by Judge Spiegel if he believed Gates's account, Yablonsky said, "I'm convinced."

David Stoner, president of Wren Communications, a telephone interconnect company, said the wiretap allegations have confirmed his suspicion that Cincinnati Bell unfairly kept competition out of the market. A party to the lawsuit leading to the divestiture of A.T.&T., Stoner said he suspected illegal wiretaps on his phones long before Gates and Draise went public. "You'd get a call on Tuesday from a customer who wants to talk about a new telephone system," Stoner said. "You set an appointment for Thursday. You get there, but strangely enough you find out that Cincinnati Bell came out the day before and did repairs. Our marketing people found coincidences that were hard to believe."

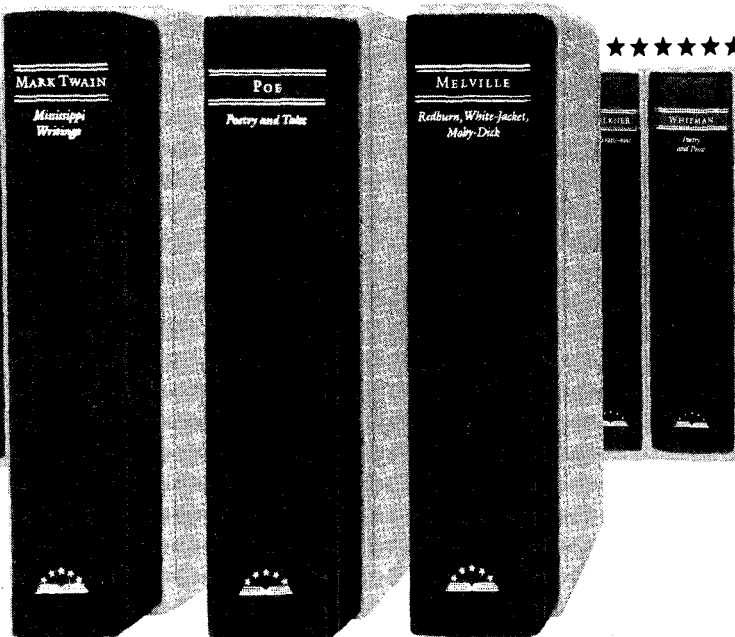
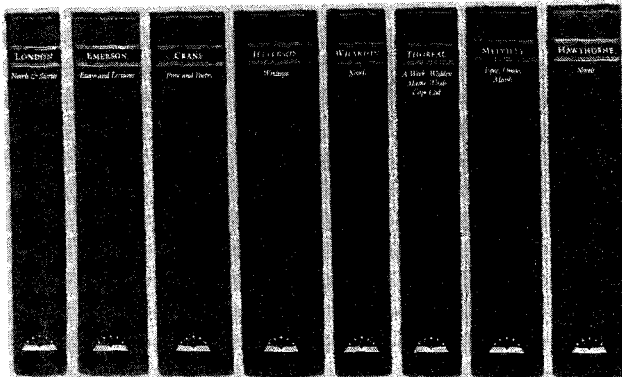
The tapping of union offices, also allegedly at the instigation of Bell, has received little media attention. Republicans have ruled Hamilton County, the largest county in Greater Cincinnati, for more than a century and corporations like Procter & Gamble, the Kroger Company and Cincinnati Bell almost forever. They are among the city's largest employers and strongest civic influences. Unions have not been nearly so stable. The closing of two General Motors plants in 1987 and 1988 cost thousands of local union jobs. Reporters at the *Enquirer* have been seeking a contract with the Gannett Company for four years.

Cincinnati Bell has adjusted its position on the wiretaps since Gates and Draise first outlined their allegations last August for the *Mt. Washington Press*, a small weekly. At the time, Bell spokespersons called them liars and denied that the wiretapping had taken place. Six months later, Dwight Hibbard, the company's chief executive officer, in his first public statement on the matter, called his two former employees "renegades." Now, Bell lawyers argue that if there was wiretapping, Gates and Draise acted on their own.

The retreat was unavoidable. Some of Gates and Draise's claims have been verified by the police confessions and the testimony of disinterested third parties. One businessman told the grand jury that he agreed to help tap the Black Muslims. The line Draise hooked to a listening post hung until recently from the wall in a stockroom in a building across from the mosque. A retired hotel-security chief has testified that he threw Gates, West and three Cincinnati policemen out of the Stouffer's Inn shortly before Gerald Ford visited. A reel-to-reel tape recorder was found in the hotel's phone switching room a few days later.



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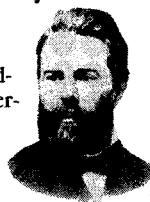


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Hibbard insists that Cincinnati Bell has conducted a thorough internal investigation and found no evidence to support the wiretapping allegations. West and Gabor, the security officers who allegedly coordinated the illegal operations, passed polygraph examinations last October and November. But they took the tests before Gates gave a deposition in the class-action suit. How could the examiner have known what to ask? Bell spokeswoman Cynthia Cantoni says the examiner conducted lengthy pretest interviews with West and Gabor, but Bell refuses to release those questions and answers. On the test itself, the two men were asked only three questions: Will you tell the truth? Did you arrange for the wiretaps? Did you know about them?

The phone company is doing its best to discredit Gates. At a press conference on March 17, Hibbard sat next to a placard that proclaimed that the whistleblower committed adultery with a "female subordinate" at Bell. The large letters announced that "he discussed his affair, including intimate sexual activities, with other female subordinates. His crew became a captive audience to many lengthy discussions of . . . sexual activities, desires and dislikes." Hibbard never once referred to the placard.

Despite the grand jury investigation, Federal officials seem as much of an obstacle to solving the wiretap mystery as the phone company. Gates told Representative Willis Gradison in October 1985 that he placed wiretaps for the police and Bell, with the authorization of the F.B.I. In November 1986, Gradison wrote Attorney General Edwin Meese 3d asking for an investigation. But virtually nothing happened until the story broke this past August 31. A week later Assistant U.S. Attorney Brinkman took Gates before the grand jury without ever having interviewed him. Brinkman, who says no laws have been broken in the wiretapping scheme, has treated Gates as a hostile witness. Former F.B.I. agent Yablonsky says Gates is trying to help law enforcement and accuses Brinkman of "beating up" on Gates and mishandling the investigation. This view is shared by others who are urging on the Public Integrity Section's inspection of her performance.

The U.S. Attorney's office refuses to say how long the grand jury investigation will continue. And given the cloud over Brinkman's performance, it's especially difficult to predict what the outcome will be. But one thing is certain: The wiretapping suggests that for years a secret cabal may have been at work that reaches into Cincinnati's highest

business and political echelons. Oddly for one who has been tapped, civil rights champion Howard Metzenbaum has been silent on this widespread invasion of privacy. He—or someone in Congress—should initiate an outside inquiry into the scandal. Clearly, Cincinnati's power brokers are reluctant to pursue a full-scale investigation—especially knowing that their phones still may be tapped. □

■ DEMILITARIZING EUROPE

It Takes Two Not to Tango

JOHN TIRMAN

On the eve of the conventional arms talks in Vienna, British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe remarked that NATO had no intention of being drawn into a "competitive striptease" with Moscow. He was reacting to the Soviet proposal, released on March 6, which calls for deep cuts and a new defensive orientation of forces. The West is often perplexed by Soviet peace initiatives, and this appears to be the case again, even though the ideas embodied in the Soviet Union's plan have Western roots.

Secretary of State James Baker 3d, though not as candid as Howe, at first advised his alliance colleagues to treat the Soviet Union's "sweeping but impractical" proposals skeptically. Then, following a March 7 meeting with his Russian counterpart, Eduard Shevardnadze, Baker described the plan as "remarkably close to the NATO proposal." His optimism was widely echoed by opinion- and policy-makers in the United States throughout March. Particularly welcome was the first of the three-stage plan, in which the Warsaw Pact countries would drastically reduce their advantage in tanks. But U.S. leaders are uneasy about further—and equal—cuts envisioned for stage two. Of the third phase, in which new notions of "defensive defense" are central, there has been virtually no comment.

In Western Europe, however, innovative theories of "non-offensive" defense have been nurtured for more than a decade. The theories sketch out a security relationship in which each side reduces forces and reshapes them to constrain the ability to attack quickly, decisively and deeply across the central front dividing Europe. To achieve those objectives, each side must eliminate or reduce threatening weaponry: tanks, "deep interdiction" attack aircraft, long-range missiles and the like. Defensive weapons—antitank devices, for example—would be substituted, and demilitarized corridors and other "confidence-building" measures would be established. The key concept is the reduction of offensive threats to insure that any blitzkrieg strategy would fail. The

John Tirman is executive director of the Winston Foundation in Boston and editor of the Annual Review of Peace Activism.

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easing of threats would also arrest the arms race that growing offensive capability inevitably spurs.

These nonoffensive defense ideas gradually gained a foothold in Europe. By the mid-1980s the British Labor Party, the West German Social Democratic Party and like-minded politicians of other parties adopted some of the new theories as their official position. In February, social democrats throughout Europe endorsed aspects of defensive defense for the upcoming election campaign for the European Parliament.

Ironically, Gorbachev appropriated the ideas of European and American researchers in devising the sweeping proposal forwarded last month in Vienna. Jorgen Dragsdahl, a defense writer and editor with the Copenhagen daily *Information*, has traced this influence and attributes it to peace researchers such as Anders Boserup in Denmark, Robert Neild in Britain and Horst Afheldt in West Germany. Through seminars and consultations with Soviet policy analysts, some of their ideas gradually filtered into the Kremlin. A few Soviet diplomats, notably Lev Meldelevich, former Ambassador to Denmark, took a keen interest in the theories and channeled them back to Moscow.

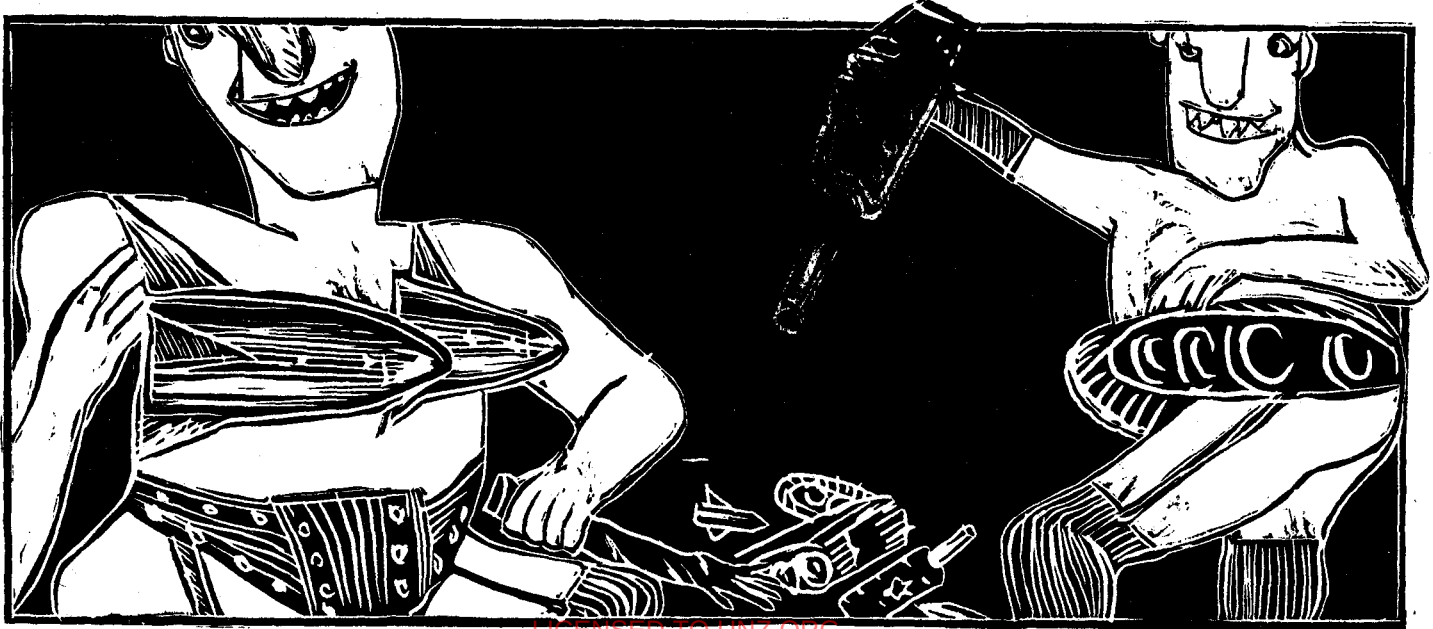
By 1986 the language of nonoffensive defense began to appear in speeches and official statements of key advisers to Gorbachev. Increasingly, the Soviet leader hinted at his own conversion. Then, in his dramatic speech before the U.N. General Assembly last December 7, Gorbachev announced this defensive orientation in tandem with his vow to unilaterally cut 10,000 tanks and 500,000 troops from Soviet forces. The reaction of the Washington establishment to that speech was a befuddled silence. Despite the widespread acceptance by European defense intellectuals of nonoffensive defense ideas, they have been ignored in the United States. The emphasis in U.S. policy circles instead has been on burden-sharing within NATO; the potential for burden reduction, combined with the stability promised by defensive strategies, has not been seriously explored.

Drawing from the European theorists, a few American analysts have articulated such a posture. Jonathan Dean,

who was chief U.S. negotiator at the conventional forces talks from 1978 to 1981, is a quite prominent advocate of the new approach. Randall Forsberg, the author of the nuclear freeze proposal of 1980, has geared her Brookline, Massachusetts, think tank, the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies, to researching and publicizing non-offensive defense. Several others have devised similar notions of "common security," but their ideas have made few inroads in official Washington. This resistance to fresh formulas for European détente is all the more perplexing in light of budget pressures. NATO consumes 60 percent of the Pentagon's overall budget, which is nearly \$300 billion each year. Europeans also face demographic changes that will make it difficult—and costly—to supply troops in future years.

The Soviet offer in Vienna holds the promise of vast economic savings—which is crucial to Gorbachev's domestic restructuring—and could achieve many of NATO's long-sought goals for European security. The West's complaint about Soviet advantages in tanks, for example, would largely be moot after the first stage: Within two to three years the Warsaw Pact would remove ten tanks for every one removed by NATO. Shevardnadze said this first stage would result in "equal collective ceilings which would be 10 to 15 percent lower than the lowest level possessed by either" of the alliances. It is also lower than NATO's ultimate goal for the negotiations. In the second stage of the Soviet plan, lasting another two to three years, forces would be cut again—this time by 25 percent. Like the first stage, this would include tanks, armored vehicles, troops and attack aircraft. The defensive orientation would begin in stage three. As envisioned by advocates of this approach, the ability to attack would be curbed by eliminating much of the mobility of weaponry and troops. Equality of force levels, demilitarized zones and intrusive verification measures would insure that the defensive structure is successful.

NATO apparently objects to several aspects of Gorbachev's initiative. It wants to exclude aircraft and naval forces from the talks. According to a recent report published by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Plough-



shares Fund in Cambridge, Massachusetts, NATO has essentially equal forces but larger qualitative advantages in these categories. The Western alliance rejects the extent of force reductions, saying NATO defenses would be stretched too thin in such a scheme. It also refuses to consider Moscow's call to remove short-range nuclear weapons from Europe, although sentiment in West Germany is strongly in favor of this disarmament.

The Vienna talks will, of course, produce hard bargaining on these and other points, even though NATO's initial attitude is not encouraging. Howe, Baker and others in the alliance have made soothing remarks about the Soviet stage-one proposal, probably because the Warsaw Pact will do most of the cutting in that phase. An agreement that encompassed only these cuts, however welcome, would nonetheless forfeit remarkable opportunities. Under the NATO plan, very little reduction in Western forces is offered. The result would be more balance, though the Soviet "superiority" in Europe is vastly overstated, as the Academy/Ploughshares Fund study makes plain. But the real payoff in the Soviet proposal is in stages two and three. Economic savings would not accrue to the United States unless deep cuts were negotiated. And the defensive orientation sought by Moscow and many West Europeans would reduce incentives for reintroducing offensive weaponry that can again make the central-front confrontation perilous.

It is this last point that seems to escape policy-makers in Washington and London. Nonoffensive doctrines not only provide for more stability—and less cost—in the short term; they institutionalize détente in a way that the stage-one reductions cannot. Even when East-West tensions are low, the urge to "modernize" offensive arms seems irresistible, as we now see in the controversy over short-range Lance nuclear missiles stationed in West Germany. And if relations between the two alliances deteriorate, an arms race could recommence more easily in an arms-control regime like that sought by NATO or from a stage-one-only Soviet plan.

The defensive defense vision would also benefit the surge toward independence in Eastern Europe. There is no greater symbol of Soviet dominion than the tank. A greatly reduced Soviet military presence in Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany would surely enhance the drive toward liberalization. Polish Solidarity leader Jacek Kuron, for example, has called for a large neutralized zone in Central Europe. Eastern bloc dissidents increasingly realize that human rights will benefit if national security pressures are diminished.

The opportunity for military, economic and political gains from an ambitious disarmament agenda in the new talks is evident. The Soviet plan, though not flawless, is clearly preferable in spirit to the tepid and somewhat confused NATO posture. Moreover, the Soviet Union—via the influence of European theorists—is offering to guarantee objectives the West has long sought: equality, stability, freedom from surprise attack.

There has been a great deal of talk about the cold war waning and the West having "won." If so, we should at least enjoy the spoils. The time to do that is now, and the place to cash in is Vienna. □

Moscow Letter

(Continued From Front Cover)

some of them a well-organized mixture of political rally and theater. On March 4 "A Political Spectacle in Three Acts" was staged at the Institute of International Relations, a mini-university attached to the Foreign Ministry. Produced jointly by the institute's student impresarios and Memorial, the evening featured speeches, films and fledgling rock and roll bands. It attracted an audience of more than 1,000, mostly young people. Speakers included Anna Larina, the widow of Nikolai Bukharin, the Bolshevik leader executed by Stalin, who herself survived twenty years in the Gulag; Aleksei Adzhubei, the son-in-law of Nikita Khrushchev, whose reputation is now soaring; and the writer Ales Adamovich, who described the newly discovered N.K.V.D. killing fields at Kuropaty, near Minsk.

The ongoing effort by Soviet scholars and anti-Stalinist activists to determine how many millions were arrested and killed in the terror from 1929 to 1953 is probably the most traumatic current topic here. The remains of many of those summarily executed by the N.K.V.D. are being unearthed in just a few mass graves. Initial estimates of the number of bodies found at Kuropaty, for example, put the figure at 30,000, but people involved in the excavation now report that the total may be closer to 300,000. Similar killing fields are being uncovered across the country, from Kiev and Moscow to Siberia. Roy Medvedev, who for twenty years worked as a dissident historian of Stalinism, has been especially active in this effort.

Between the speakers and clips from the anti-Stalinist film *Repentance*, the bands played songs with such titles as "Gulag Archipelago" and "N.K.V.D." As the evening demonstrated, anti-Stalinism is not only the province of the older Moscow intelligentsia but is a larger grass-roots movement that has spread to the younger generation and its popular culture, and to the mass media. During the intermission the audience flowed into the institute's foyer, where Memorial had organized an exhibit of photographs and materials documenting the Stalinist terror, and of prospective designs for the monument honoring the victims.

The next day both Memorial and the Pamyat ("Memory") Society, a neo-Stalinist group, took their forces outdoors. Early in the morning, a small band of Pamyat members laid a wreath on Stalin's grave in Red Square, and at noon Memorial staged a rally in Gorky Park that drew a crowd of about 3,000. An array of people streamed into the park, aged survivors of Stalin's camps alongside young couples pushing baby strollers. Sixteen speakers and a crowd of organizers jammed into the back of a rickety flatbed truck, including the poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko and the writer Yuri Karyakin. While most of the speakers looked to the Gorbachev leadership for support—Karyakin even called for the resignation of Yegor Ligachev, reputed to be Gorbachev's conservative opponent in the Politburo—others issued more radical indictments of the Party's rule and called for a multiparty system. Even here, in the otherwise cohesive

Memorial movement, *perestroika* has unleashed a striking pluralism of opinion.

The elections for the new Congress of Peoples' Deputies, the first major stage of Mikhail Gorbachev's democratization program, involved more complex issues, not to mention procedures. One-third of the 2,250 deputies come from nationwide "social organizations" ranging from the Communist Party and the Writers Union to the Society of Inventors, and 1,538 come from local electoral districts. Three-quarters of the district elections were multicandidate contests that generated widespread enthusiasm, despite concern (unfounded as it turned out) that many of them were rigged.

The campaigns were a blend of Soviet formalism and Western-style ballyhoo. Muscovites got their first taste of unruly caucuses, campaign literature, street posters and ward politics. They also leapt straight into the age of the television campaign. *Good Evening, Moscow*, for example, featured nightly debates between candidates running in the city's twenty-six districts.

The focus in the West on political celebrities like former Moscow Party boss Boris Yeltsin and Andrei Sakharov, whose withdrawal from a district race in February disappointed his supporters, obscured other candidates who were, in some cases, just as radical. In a televised debate among the twelve candidates running in the Gagarin district, Moscow's answer to Manhattan's Upper West Side, Eldar Ryazanov, a film director known for his comedies, advocated a multiparty system, an independent television channel and the creation of a voluntary army and a free trade-union movement. Ryazanov ended by calling on the K.G.B. to open its archives and telling voters, "Believe in anything you want—God or Communism." Though he lost on March 26, the two candidates who made the district runoff, scheduled for early April, had almost equally radical proposals.

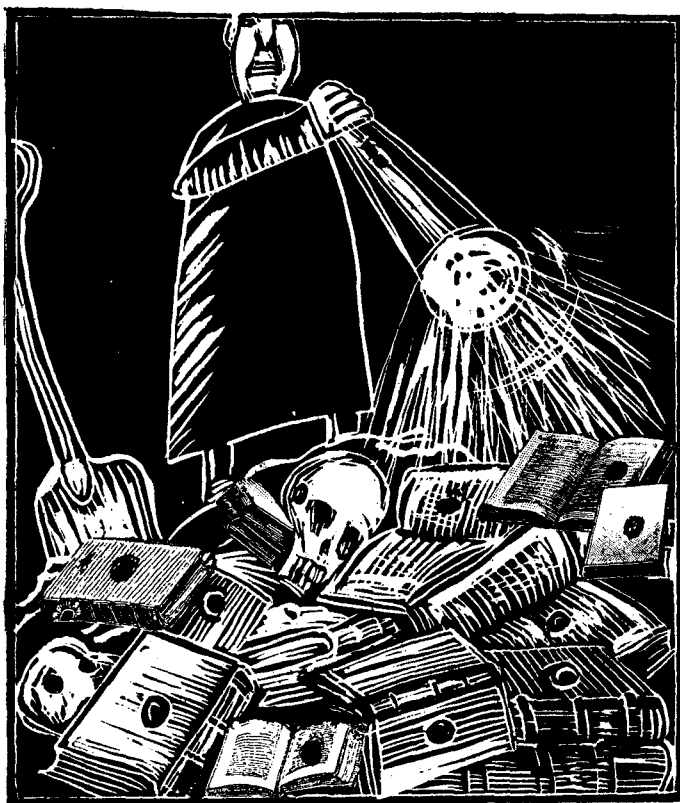
A new generation of Soviet political leaders also appeared on the scene, like Sergei Stankevich, a 36-year-old scholar of the American electoral system. Stankevich, who ran in the Cheryomushki district, is a member of the Moscow People's Front, an independent political organization whose members include students, "*lumpenintelligentsia*" and a few workers. Campaigning at the front's "pre-founding" conference on March 11, he called for an end to censorship and for changes in the legal and electoral systems. In the March 26 balloting, he made the runoff with 49 percent of the vote.

Yeltsin's victorious campaign, on the other hand, seemed to be important as much for who he was as for what he said. The prospect of a deposed party leader gaining redemption through a popular electoral process captured the imagination of many Muscovites. Even some liberal *perestroishchiki* who do not like Yeltsin's authoritarian manner voted for him because they disliked the way he was ousted. The alarm of the party leadership at Yeltsin's popularity probably lay behind its decision, ten days before the election, to set up a commission to investigate charges that some of Yeltsin's statements "contradict the political directions of the Central Committee," of which Yeltsin remains a full member. But this only enhanced his popularity. Running for Moscow's only citywide seat, Yeltsin won a remarkable victory.

As the nationwide election results came in on March 27, Moscow's most radical democratizers were jubilant. The returns seemed to show that apparatus candidates had been dealt a stunning blow in many cities. In multicandidate races, insurgent candidates—some of them well-known reformers, others virtually unknown young people—had defeated high-ranking party and state officials. Even in many districts where establishment candidates had run unopposed, voters struck out their names on the ballot, thereby forcing fresh elections with different candidates. As a result, Moscow's intellectual radicals are calling March 26 "a historic day . . . the birth of our democracy." Long worried that their democratic ideas had little support among working people, the radicals are convinced by the election results that "the people have matured far more and are far more ready for democracy than we ever imagined."

With the national elections over and consumer goods still in a state of what Russians call *defitsit*, many Soviet citizens have returned to the consumption of *glasnost*. Even after four years of greatly diminished censorship, Muscovites talk animatedly about the latest taboo to be shattered.

Two recently released items are currently the talk of the town. One is a four-part article by Alexander Tsipko that began in the November issue of *Science and Life*. Deepening the debate over the historical origins of Stalinism, Tsipko argues that original Marxism-Leninism and the old Bolshevik Party itself bore a large share of guilt for that national tragedy. Readers were doubly surprised by the news that the author, a professor of philosophy, works in the Central Committee apparatus. The other widely read publication is billed as the stenographic record of the Central Committee meeting of October 21, 1987, which led to Yeltsin's ouster. Printed in the new party journal, *News of the Central Committee*, the



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transcript includes Yeltsin's speech protesting the leadership's policies. Its publication should be seen not only as a tactical move against Yeltsin but also as an important act of party *glasnost*. In addition, it may prefigure another milestone that some party reformers have called for—making public the proceedings of Central Committee meetings, most of which have been kept confidential since the 1920s. The journal is scheduled to print the text of Khrushchev's 1956 speech to the 20th Party Congress, never before published here.

More generally, it is virtually impossible to guess which formerly unknown or conformist magazine will become the new spearhead of *glasnost*. Until now, the weekly *Ogonyok*, with 3.2 million copies, and the international weekly newspaper *Moscow News*, whose Russian circulation is 350,000, have been the best-known flagships of *glasnost*. But two smaller, once-obscure monthly magazines, closer in spirit, size and distribution to Western journals of opinion, have boldly entered the competition. *XX Century and Peace*, published in five languages by the traditionally propagandistic Peace Committee, used to be a handout for foreign tourists. But during the past three years, the magazine has published several former dissidents (indeed, one has been hired as an editor), argued that Soviet borders should be opened and citizens allowed to travel freely, insisted that the United States and the Soviet Union bear joint responsibility for the cold war and, in its February issue, was the first to publish anything by Alexander Solzhenitsyn—his 1974 essay "To Live Without Lies." Chain-smoking in the magazine's tiny offices in a dilapidated tenement just off Gorky Street, managing editor Boris Senkin explained that until the publication of Solzhenitsyn's article the censorship agency, Glavlit, had largely ignored *XX Century and Peace*. A few days after the article appeared, a Glavlit official called to tell the editors, "From now on we'll be working together." The editors reacted by organizing a round table on censorship and how to abolish it. No word yet on whether it will be published.

The once-conformist but now noisy journal is *Gorizont* ("Horizon"). More than a year ago, its youthful editor, Yevgeni Yefimov, renamed what had been a monthly propaganda brochure for party workers and radically changed its contents. Yefimov explained, "We're in a competition to be the first to publish once-forbidden authors and material. Every month it is harder to find both." Despite its limited print run of 100,000 copies and small format, *Gorizont* has recently attracted a devoted and increasing readership. In May, Yefimov intends to publish a fragment from Trotsky's commentaries on Stalin and, in a summer issue, an excerpt from the memoirs of Anatoly Marchenko, the dissident martyr who died in jail in 1986 after years of imprisonment. "Trotsky gave us a lot of problems," said Yefimov. When the censors refused permission to publish the article, he appealed to the Central Committee's Ideological Department, which told him, Go ahead. Yefimov explained, "Every month we have an alternative article ready to run in case we don't get something through the censor." But enough is getting published in many magazines and newspapers to keep readers enthralled. Or as writer Ales Adamovich remarked, "Today, it's more interesting to read than to live." ☐

BOOKS & THE ARTS.

A Conservative Credo

ROBERT HEILBRONER

THE FATAL CONCEIT: The Errors of Socialism. The Collected Works of F.A. Hayek: Volume I. Edited by W.W. Bartley III. Chicago University Press. 180 pp. \$24.95.

The fatal conceit of socialism, says F.A. Hayek, is that "man is able to shape the world around him according to his wishes." The essential argument in favor of the "extended order of human cooperation," as Hayek calls capitalism, is precisely the giving up of this hubristic belief. The design of capitalism is beyond the full grasp of reason, so that its destiny is rescued from the invariably dangerous stewardship of human foresight and handed over to the well-proven keeping of its own inscrutable processes.

Hayek is more renowned today for his staunch advocacy of a conservative political view than for the explorations in monetary theory that won him a Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Science in 1974. Yet one can find connections between that earlier work and his later interest in political economy. As early as the mid-1930s Hayek had made the claim that the crucial problem for any society was the means by which it achieved internal coordination, and that the crucial *economic* aspect of this problem was that no single intelligence could have access to all the knowledge needed to "solve" its material provisioning.

With this perception, the stage was already set for a rejection of socialism as a system whose coordination entails planning, for this requires an intrinsically impossible, and therefore pernicious, omniscience. The perception also provides the premise for an embrace of capitalism because its "extended order of coordination" (read "market system") is built on knowledge gained from the searches, achievements and failures of its many participants, and is thus shared by all, although possessed by none.

Despite, or perhaps because of, this Olympian perspective, *The Fatal Conceit* adds little to our knowledge of why socialist planning has come on hard

times, or of what capitalism's future will be. The difficulty lies in Hayek's extraordinarily abstract vision of both systems: There is not a word about the Soviet Union or the United States in the book, much less Yugoslavia or Japan. We are told that a rejection of capitalism would "doom a large part of mankind to poverty and death" and that "socialism constitutes a threat to the present and future welfare of the human race," but we are told nothing of the gigantic pressures that capitalism develops in its Sisyphean struggle to accumulate profit, nor of the equally disruptive pressures that social-



ism engenders in its attempt to control the political and economic life of its people. The consequence is that both systems appear in such attenuated forms as to lose any relation to their living historical exemplars, past or present. Worse, just as socialism is consigned to oblivion by virtue of its "impossibility," capitalism appears to be consigned to life eternal, which raises the question in both cases as to why their respective fates need to be fussed over.

It is tempting, but I think it would be a mistake, to dismiss Hayek's book out of hand. I have long felt that the conservative vision, like its liberal and radical counterparts, contains a powerful core of beliefs—powerful not because these beliefs could be shown to be incontrovertibly true or false but precisely be-

cause they were not susceptible of proof or disproof. Hayek's book lends itself to such an interpretation. I have extracted some elements of a conservative credo from the text, although I must emphasize that these are my selections and phrasings, not those of Hayek himself:

§ There is a "wisdom" in the ideas and social relationships that have survived the winnowings of history. The wisdom is of a different kind than human ratiocination—it is concerned with rules rather than outcomes, with evolutionary rather than equilibrating processes. Tradition is the name for this wisdom by which we adapt to the unknown; we ignore it at our peril.

§ Any society that has established an elaborate division of labor depends on impersonal and systemic, rather than personal and face-to-face, modes of social orchestration. These systemic modes are crucially dependent on roles and institutions that remove or greatly limit the coordinative means characteristic of the primitive community. Extended societies therefore require laws to establish the rights of individuals against the community—what Hayek calls "several" (i.e., individual) rights of property, contract, privacy, etc. Freedom is impossible without such rights.

§ There is a powerful urge, especially among intellectuals, to wish for a rational "order" in society. This urge causes its possessors to overlook the differences between social and rational order, and the difficulties of imposing the latter on the former. As Adam Smith said in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*: "The man of system . . . imagines that he can arrange the different members of a great society with as much ease as the hand arranges the different pieces upon a chess-board; he does not consider . . . that in the great chess-board of human society, every single piece has a principle of motion of its own."

These are instances of the core beliefs that constitute the conservative vision of human affairs. No doubt there are other elements of this viewpoint in Hayek's text and certainly there are others outside it. All such beliefs require thoughtful consideration—once again, not because they are right or wrong but because they speak to deep promptings in the human psyche. For me, the value of *The Fatal Conceit* lies in its use as a quarry of such beliefs, not as a declaration of faith posing as social science. □

Robert Heilbroner's most recent book is Behind the Veil of Economics (W.W. Norton).

Not at Home on the Range

ANNE MENDELSON

BUCKEYE COOKERY AND PRACTICAL HOUSEKEEPING. Edited by Estelle Woods Wilcox. Introduction by Virginia M. Westbrook. Minnesota Historical Society Press. 536 pp. Paper \$12.95.

SEASON TO TASTE: Herbs and Spices in American Cooking. By Jeannette Ferrary and Louise Fiszer. Simon and Schuster. 396 pp. \$19.95.

GOOD & PLENTY: America's New Home Cooking. By Victoria Wise and Susanna Hoffman. Harper & Row. 334 pp. \$22.95.

At a plush and solemn conference organized last year by the American Institute of Wine and Food, various experts on marketing trends could be heard agreeing at one panel discussion that home cooking is a declining tradition rapidly yielding to takeout food and frozen dinners. The next day a bunch of distinguished publishers and editors were noting, with some unease, that the number of cookbooks grows every year as if they had litters when no one was looking. More than one participant wondered aloud what people were *doing* with all those books.

This situation is not so incomprehensible as it may first appear. The old practical framework of cookery, which involved several pairs of female hands actively at work in a kitchen for many hours a day, fell apart progressively throughout this century with changes in patterns of women's employment. Anything left of it is speedily vanishing in the age of single-parent families and two-paycheck households. Its disappearance has liberated cooking professionals and food writers into realms quite divorced from utility—the more so as the national housing crisis increasingly differentiates those with a comfortable percentage of their income to spend on food from the rest. Inescapably, the audience for most cookbooks keeps creeping further upscale, as market researchers have it.

Practical culinary advice has not quite died out, but it offers limited growth opportunities. No one is going to buy

stacks of basic cooking manuals or books on how to keep food bills down. Most of the books in the stores are addressed to quite different attitudes and pocketbooks. Real addicts will honestly say that they read cookbooks like novels. Understandably, more and more of the field is occupied with books to fantasize by—expensive evocations of Ruritanian cuisine, dazzling dinner parties and orgasmic chocolate experiences—or books for hobbyists who may cook no more than a dozen meals a year.

Three recent publications offer opportunities to compare past and present attitudes toward cooking, and writing about cooking. Two are by capable, even thoughtful participants in the current California food scene. The other is the Minnesota Historical Society's paperback reprint of the famous nineteenth-century manual *Buckeye Cookery and Practical Housekeeping*, a best seller under various titles from 1876 to 1905. Looked at side by side, these works underscore the fact that while for the earlier writers and their audience cooking belonged to a coherent order of household business, cookbook authors now take for granted a tastemaker's role similar to that of fashion arbiters.

Today people who make a living by cooking for a clientele or writing recipes tend to live in a different frame of reference from those with households to care for—unless the home cooks happen to keep up with what's hot. In American culinary literature one sees a hint of diverging domestic/professional emphases as far back as the 1824 *Virginia Housewife* of Mary Randolph (an aristocrat) and the many books of her younger Philadelphia contemporary Eliza Leslie (who wrote for a living). Since at least the turn of the century, professional teachers and writers have exercised a staggering influence on the cooking of middle-class housewives. Now, when much of the housewife's mission is gone, the proportion of written advice to actual accomplishment is nearly grotesque, and the prestige of chefs easily outstrips that of unindicted stock traders. But *Buckeye Cookery*, a hybrid compilation of recipes contributed by individuals, and commentary by a professional editor, shows that a century ago such books rested on a widely shared understanding of cookery and seriously addressed the demands of the home as a workplace.

According to Virginia M. Westbrook's fine introduction to the reprint of the 1880 edition, the book originated as a fund-raising effort for a Congregational church in the Ohio hometown of its editor, Estelle Woods Wilcox. But it rapidly took on another life when she and her husband acquired the copyright for their Minneapolis-based publishing company and added recipes contributed by the nationwide readership of their magazine *The Housekeeper*. In contrast to an earlier, maddeningly abridged Dover reprint of the 1883 *Buckeye*, this presentation of the complete text really does justice to the most ambitious, lucid late nineteenth-century American attempt to get all sorts of household information into purposeful order. It is instructive to examine the kinds of dishes then much admired (various cold dessert "creams"), or just starting to be popular (cookies), and fun to poke around for unexpected entries like New York Governor Samuel Tilden's recipe for veal loaf. But what holds the attention is the sense the book conveys of an integral female mission.

"Housekeeping, whatever may be the opinion of the butterflies of the period," Mrs. Wilcox writes, "is an accomplishment in comparison to which, in its bearing on woman's relation to real life and to the family, all others are trivial." It was no light business to translate that article of faith into practical routine at a time when daily home tasks usually exceeded the capacity of one unaided woman and when servants were leaving household work for factory and shop jobs. The attempt to keep a tremendous responsibility on a manageable footing is evident everywhere in *Buckeye Cookery*. The suggestions for baby care, dealing with medical emergencies and planning the cooking around the weekly marathon of laundry and the annual one of spring cleaning emphasize the crucial interconnectedness of a woman's domestic duties.

In contrast, recent cookbooks treat cooking as an isolated accomplishment. They must confer some plausibility on a gaudy scene that coincides with the dwindling *raison d'être* of home cooking. The prestige and visibility of food journalism have increased in inverse ratio to its actual household purpose. Increasingly, food writers and their audience seem to see food merely as a vehicle for contrivance. The current culinary chic reflects our culture's genius for transforming novelty into stylish tics. It also shows how food writing has become divorced from daily life and ordinary people.

Anne Mendelson is a culinary historian who writes frequently about American cookbooks.

The great wealth of everyday skills and knowledge that was lost when women joined the work force in large numbers is manifest in the simple brevity of the *Buckeye* recipes. (It hardly needs saying that change brought gains as well as losses.) Housewives of 1880 commonly had a better practical acquaintance than many of today's professional cooks with the properties of basic ingredients like flour. Many did not use written recipes at all, and those who did brought some prior knowledge and individual initiative to what they read. Today no cookbook writer can count on an audience's understanding of the obvious.

There is a troubling social dimension as well. Even a cursory glance shows that *Buckeye Cookery* addressed a broader middle-class audience than all but a very few kitchen bibles of today. It presents "the charm of good housekeeping" as an egalitarian value, as achievable in a small house as a palace. One does not come away thinking that the recipes in this book would have been cruelly irrelevant to most households in Mrs. Wilcox's America. Today even cookbooks that try to bring us something pleasant and useful in the name of American cooking suggest how much has become stagier and more affected in our lives—and, inescapably, in our cooking.

Season to Taste, a book assembled with much intelligence by Jeannette Ferrary and Louise Fiszer, constructs a loose nonchronological picture of American cooking over several centuries by surveying the uses, past and present, of some twenty-five important herbs and spices. Its pleasures include a sampling of "vintage recipes" culled from old cookbooks and an uncommon respect for our neglected culinary literature—how nice to see someone quoting the admirable Sheila Hibben, forgotten for nearly thirty years. Its liabilities include some excruciatingly sloppy research that has the German *Aalsuppe* ("eel soup") becoming "sage-wrapped eel" and a tablespoon of parsley, rather than a cup, supplying "the recommended daily allowance of vitamins A and C and iron!" And then there are the authors' own recipes, dishes that are mostly *au courant* without being perverse and could reasonably be cooked for family or friends by middle-class cooks willing to spend some money—not whole fortunes—on good ingredients. But in another way these recipes mirror something changed, and not for the better, in people's culinary reflexes.

In fact, the way food is seasoned is a major clue to the gap between the *Buckeye* epoch's mentality and ours. Mrs. Wilcox barely treats herbs and spices—niceties of seasoning were not then invariably spelled out in recipes—except in some plain-spoken words on soups:

The best seasoning is that which is made up of the smallest quantity from each of many spices. No measure can be given, because the good soup-maker must be a skillful taster . . . in short, the spicing should be delicate rather than profuse.

Comparable notions had some influence on the seasoning of all sorts of dishes until rather recently. Fifty years ago Irma Goodrich Mazza, in her splendid book *Herbs for the Kitchen*, begged her readers to season food so as to enhance rather than disguise it. By contrast, Ferrary and Fiszer do not proffer one word of advice on how to use seasonings with subtlety and good sense. They never employ their chosen flavorings in amounts like "a pinch," "a large pinch," "a generous grating." Nor would anyone writing a cookbook on herbs and spices today. Instead we get a teaspoon of grated nutmeg in a spinach filling for calzone, a tablespoon of ground cumin in a pizza dough, two tablespoons of minced fresh rosemary in a prawn and scallop dish. Or combinations like "salmon tartare" flavored with (among other things) hot mustard, two cloves of raw garlic and a cup of parsley.

What these examples illustrate is that recipe writers, like chefs, are under great pressure to keep coming up with more striking effects. With the older household focus of cooking, there was neither a reason to keep upping the ante nor a journalistic machinery for doing so. But now some of the finest cooks and writers in the business have nearly ceased to notice their aggressively competitive effect-seeking. Seasoning that does not proclaim itself to the skies is hardly thought to be seasoning at all.

Subtlety is also honored in the breach by the likable *Good & Plenty*, named for the authors' cafe in Oakland, California. Here the eminently useful aim is a cooking strategy that will serve the cook in a busy family as the equivalent of comfortable but stylish dressing. "*Good & Plenty* is for people like us," working mothers Victoria Wise and Susanna Hoffman write in their foreword. Indeed it is, but not in the sense they mean. The book speaks to people whose idea of food is the current interests of sophisticated

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food professionals. True, there are American households in which one may routinely find balsamic vinegar, walnut oil, Greek or Niçoise olives, duck and rabbit being cured with *gros sel* and homemade nouvelle pizzas. But to equate them with "America's New Home Cooking," as the subtitle calls it, is an amazing daydream.

Moreover, the actual cooking approaches in *Good & Plenty* demonstrate with what a vengeance culinary trends now strike. Seasonings and effects are more restrained than in *Season to Taste*, but both books show how swiftly the habit has spread of plastering over all kinds of flavors with megadoses of garlic. Another new standard operating procedure is the frequent use of sauces not as intrinsic parts of a dish but as a repertory of independent accents from which you select something like "Red Pepper Pesto" or "Orange and Onion Marmalade" to offset the dish in the manner of a colorful scarf. Arresting contrast rather than rich or subtle amalgamation becomes the usual way flavors work. Today it is also almost mandatory to keep raiding the bazaar of ethnic cuisines for things to be introduced in new contexts—"Vietnamese-Style Tacos," or a version of Greek *skorthalia* (a garlicky potato-based sauce) used with roast turkey. A group of fruit pies in crusts of crushed Pepperidge Farm cookies, with a slug of liquor or wine replacing most of the sugar in the filling, exemplify the drive of modern culinary fashion toward what is rosily called reinterpreting classic dishes.

Good & Plenty carries off its brightly up-to-the-minute intentions more seriously than *Season to Taste* (which is strangely bedeviled with misprints and glitches like leaving "Stuff the ducks" out of a duck recipe). It does have many odd technical lacunas and errors (only *new* peas will be nicely sautéed in two minutes; there isn't enough lactic acid in sweet cream or milk to tenderize meat). But most of Wise and Hoffman's aims are conscientiously executed, which is just why their perform-

ance leaves a disquieting impression of the modern interaction between professional food writing and what is left of home cooking. Something like Mrs. Wilcox's recipe for angel food cake bore the stamp of novelty and glamour in its day, but it was in no way esoteric, contrived or "daring." Today those qualities increasingly seem to be all that makes

food worth talking about. One can't exactly blame the pros. But if food writing becomes only an improbable shuttling act between frontiers of invention and the half-deserted home kitchen it will hasten the transformation of cooking—once a cultural accomplishment with its own deep stability—into a colorful, class-linked sideshow. □

Write in Plain Sight

RANDY COHEN

Welcome to Montana, Mr. Rushdie: You'll be writing westerns now. Your hero's name is Dusty Chaparral.

Your new name is Purvis Larue. Oh, by the way, the wig looks great; I'd think about staying blond on a permanent basis even after the hair transplants grow in.

Tonight I just want you to relax, unpack and familiarize yourself with the house. It's a rental, so you'll have to keep up with the yard work. You know much about power mowers?

One of our tailors will come by tomorrow with some swatches of tweed that will stop anything up to .45 caliber. I've got you down for a couple of sport coats and a bulletproof suit. I'm damned if I know where you'll wear them, but that's the standard order on these relocation jobs.

But listen to me go on. You must be worn out from the trip. It's a grueling way to travel, strapped to the undercarriage like that, especially on the two-lane blacktop. Are you hungry? I picked up a bag of croissanwiches down at the Burger Barn. You want the ham or the turkey? While we're on the subject, you get your milk and eggs at the Gas'n'Go up at the junction. There's a *USA Today* box up there, too. Oh yeah, you don't drive, do you? Well, you're going to call attention to yourself taking taxicabs around Missoula, so I'll be giving you lessons. One thing, though—in the morning, let me start the car. Me and Kaiser. He's trained to sniff things out. You know: Boooooom!

Now, now, Salman, don't cry. It just takes getting used to. Steer clear of the magical realism and you'll be O.K. No herd of mustangs galloping into the clouds to race 747s or anything. And remember: One casual reference to Philip

Roth, a single vivid metaphor, even a whisper of irony, and you're a dead man. Hey, it's a joke! To break the tension. There aren't a dozen Shiites in the entire county. Although there is that big mosque in Bozeman. I'm kidding!

Anyhow, you won't be here all that long. I hear President Bush is sending you on a cross-country reading tour on Air Force One—full Secret Service protection—to demonstrate his commitment to free expression. And Cardinal O'Connor is giving you an office right in St. Patrick's to work on your next book. Of course I'm still kidding.

You like a can of Hawaiian Punch to wash down that croissanwich?

I don't know how you work—a legal pad, a typewriter; heck, for all I know, you scratch your little stories in the dust with a stick—but from now on, you'll be using this, the Ingersol M-11 lap-top computer. It's IBM compatible and can fire 200 9-mm. rounds a minute. There's a played-out copper mine over in the next canyon; tomorrow afternoon we'll head up there and plink away at some cans.

Just have confidence. The Writers Protection Program is a solid operation. Even I don't know where our other authors are stashed, although I've always had a hunch that there's six or eight of them incognito in as many states all delivering manuscripts under the name of Joyce Carol Oates.

Trust me, Sal. I'm good at my job. I've relocated a lot of writers. Maybe a guy says something rude to Gore Vidal. Maybe he gets the kind of review in *The Times* that makes the old agoraphobia kick in. Or maybe he just figures to lay low until the whole Tama Janowitz/Jay McInerney thing blows over. A new town, a new name, a new prose style—it's all in a day's work. So—worst case scenario—maybe a billion guys want to see you dead. I can handle it.

Think fast: Did you read the new Cynthia Ozick? On your toes, Sally. The answer is: I don't go for romance novels.

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Randy Cohen is the author of Diary of a Flying Man, which will be published by Alfred A. Knopf this fall.

Incidentally, I wonder if, once you're settled in, you'd take a look at something. I'm no professional novelist like you; I just dabble a little on weekends. And I don't expect you to go through all 1,800 pages, but if you'd read Book One and maybe a few hundred pages of Book Three and give me your honest opinion, I'd be grateful. Are you happy with your agent? I don't have one yet. Should I? Gee, Sally, it's going to be great keeping you alive! □

FILMS.

STUART KLAWANS

**Surname Viet Given Name Nam
Heathers
Slaves of New York**

One of the least pleasant characteristics of our era must surely be its transformation of global consciousness into a sales item. When Paul Simon needed fresh inspiration, for example, he simply went out and bought a back line of black South Africans. Simon was unusually moral about it, though—he shared the songwriting credits and royalties. More typical, more certifiably hip, would be the depredations of David Byrne. From his position at the top of the cultural food chain, he nibbles a bite of salsa, a taste of ska and chews it all into a world-music pulp, suitable for brunch in the home of any white, college-educated North American. In film, perhaps the outstanding example of global buffet would be Godfrey Reggio's *Koyaanisqatsi*, known in the circles I frequent as "the Hopi horseshit movie."

But then there is Trinh T. Minh-ha. She did not buy her global consciousness but was tossed into it, like Jonah thrown to the whale. A native of Vietnam, she emigrated to the United States in 1970 and was educated here and in Paris, thus absorbing the culture of both colonizing powers. Then she took off for Senegal, where she experienced post-colonial life on a different continent while studying close up some of the music David Byrne treats as fodder.

She also began to make films, including *Reassemblage* and *Naked Spaces: Living Is Round*. They're not meant for grazing. Her latest work, *Surname Viet Given Name Nam*, is also unlikely to be a crowd-pleaser, though I fervently hope it will find its audience. Following a presen-

tation in the *New Directors/New Films* series, it will be shown at New York's Collective for Living Cinema from April 3 to April 9.

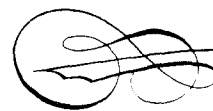
With this film, Trinh begins to construct a global consciousness based explicitly on the conditions of being an exile, a woman and an inheritor of Vietnamese culture. Obviously, the work is personal; but it is far from autobiographical. Trinh is apparently too much of a skeptic to assume she has access to the truth of her own life. Instead she relies on found footage, various texts, the testimonies of other women, old songs and historical commentaries, all mixed together with footage she shot herself. If the viewer has trouble figuring out a path through the resulting maze of sound and image, that's only fair—Trinh, too, has been forced into some hard thinking.

The crux of her thought, and of the film, comes around the halfway point of *Surname Viet Given Name Nam*, when you hear an off-camera voice—perhaps the filmmaker's own—define "interview" as "an outmoded tool of documentary." Up to this point, the film has largely been composed of segments that look like interviews but are really staged recitations, spoken by actresses, who convey just the sort of polemic one expects of a Third World feminist documentarian. Then, after the midpoint, the film abruptly switches to *real* interviews. As the voice on the soundtrack notes, these latter segments shift the picture away from the sharply defined "reality" of documentary into a realm of conflicting emotions, fugitive meanings, obliquely glimpsed characters and situations. In short, the real interviews give rise to fiction, while the fake interviews yield documentary.

If that were all Trinh had demonstrated, she would have accomplished a lot. But *Surname Viet Given Name Nam* cannot be reduced to a thesis. Keenly intelligent, sensuously multilayered, the film plays on the audience with such assurance that I feel as if, by explaining the method of the interviews, I've given away the plot of a thriller. There is a sense in which Trinh, in her global, cerebral, hypercritical way, has structured her work around one of the oldest questions in film: Will the endangered heroine escape and find happiness?

Here are the women of present-day Vietnam, not gagged and bound to the railroad tracks but imperiled all the same. They do not appear in person but are represented by stand-ins, giving pseudo-interviews in a foreign language. These ac-

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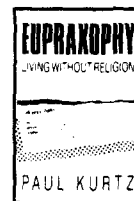
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tresses are themselves overpowered with newsreel images and song lyrics, then all but obliterated from the screen by polemical sans-serif texts. Is there any hope of the hidden, silent women breaking free of all this? The film offers no answer, but it suggests some possibilities in the second half, when the actresses begin to speak for themselves and the Vietnamese community of San Jose makes its appearance in a variety of roles. It would be going too far to read the conclusion as a happy ending—indeed, there is no ending, only a return to the imagery of boat people with which the film began. Emotionally, though, *Surname Viet Given Name Nam* leaves you with an impression of the courage and persistent strength of Vietnamese women, not in terms of propaganda-poster heroics but on the human level. You don't see it happen—Trinh doesn't claim it will—but somehow, you believe the intended victim on the railroad tracks is going to untie herself and walk off, battered but alive, the gag loosened and worn as a scarf.

Of course, even fortune's favorites have their sorrows. The most glamorous woman I ever met once told me she had felt like an outsider in high school. It seemed impossible; yet she, like the rest of us, had suffered from the fear of looking ridiculous, the inability to keep her utterances from falling into a dorklike muddle, the confusion about what to wear and whom to befriend and, above all, how and when to respond to the hormonal terrorism of her own body. Since I was in my 30s when she gave me this confidence, I could treat it with equanimity. Had we both still been in high school, I might well have wanted to kill her. To learn that a goddess or god, too, sometimes feels inadequate only makes us mortals harder on ourselves.

Perhaps there are three or four people, not counting Mother Teresa, who have learned not to seethe over high-school classmates who seemed perfect. For the rest of us, there is *Heathers*, a new comedy written by Daniel Waters and directed by Michael Lehmann. The film lets you fulfill one of the core fantasies of adolescence: seeing all the popular kids in their graves. At the same time, it exonerates you of any guilt, since the agent of the popular kids' destruction is popular herself. Instead of a hockey mask and a chainsaw, she sports a fetching, off-the-shoulder sweatshirt and just the right touch of lipstick. Nevertheless, she feels like an outsider; she suffers. And you

get the satisfaction of watching her sweat, while she carries out the dirty work for you.

Veronica (Winona Ryder) is an apprentice member of the ultimate clique at Westerburg High School in Sherwood, Ohio. The three most popular girls, all named Heather, have let her join their group, following an initiation by croquet. (The rite calls for a standard lawn set, rather than the Lewis Carroll equipment, but still involves a degree of Wonderland cruelty compounded by Samuel Beckett staging. Veronica is buried in the ground with only her head exposed, the better to serve for target practice.) Having been accepted by the Heathers, Veronica is then entitled to participate in their main activity: making everybody else feel unacceptable.

As it happens, she has no stomach for the job. At night, she gets out her diary, screws in her monocle, and writes with large, flamboyant strokes about her friends' excesses. Heather One (Kim Walker) has become so autocratic, so dangerous, that Veronica believes she *must be stopped*.

Enter the boy with the motorcycle. J.D. (Christian Slater) wears a Wild West duster and a ring in his left ear and has been to seven high schools in as many states. He also has a catlike face and narrow, dangerous eyes and speaks in complete sentences. After he's cemented his relationship with Veronica by climbing through her window in the middle of the night, he joins her on a breakfast visit to Heather One, where he improves on a prank Veronica wants to play. She intends to offer the hung-over Heather a concoction of milk and orange juice, which is sure to make her vomit. J.D. proposes drain opener instead. "I'm a no-rust-buildup man, myself," he drawls, a minute before Heather One crashes face-down through a coffee table.

Veronica is innocent, of course (although, if you have any interest in Freud, you will think it significant that she mistakenly proffered the fatal mug, rather than the one that was merely nauseating). J.D. appears to be innocent as well, for the moment. Even so, the young lovers have a corpse on their hands, which could be difficult to explain. So, under J.D.'s guidance, Veronica forges a suicide note from Heather. It's easy. And, though Veronica can't admit it to herself, it's fun, too.

Needless to say, the plot does not end there. J.D. becomes more deadly, Veronica more guilt-ridden, while high-

school suicide becomes the hot topic in Sherwood, Ohio, and the coolest thing going at Westerburg High. "My teen angst bullshit has a body count," Veronica moans, as she begins to realize that *she's* the one who has to be stopped, along with her thrilling but psycho boyfriend.

I have no idea how teen-agers will take all this—especially since everybody in the cast looks 25, no matter what their real age—but I laughed all the way to the last reel, when Hollywood script conventions finally took over. At that point, the film became mechanical enough to let me think of the questions it had not addressed—minor matters, such as anything having to do with class and race. *Heathers* takes place in a school that is uniformly affluent (though some are more affluent than others), where the handful of nonwhite kids have no discernible ethnic traits. Sex is a fairly easy transaction, too; Veronica dislikes some young men (the ones who paw her) and likes others, and proceeds from there with no inner conflicts. You can imagine her winding up in jail, but not on a psychiatrist's couch.

So, I must report that *Heathers* is not perfect. It's just a lot better than I had any reason to expect—full of the narrative jolts Hitchcock called "bumps," the all-American eccentricity you find in Jonathan Demme's better work and the dialogue of a young screenwriter who already knows how to make your head snap back with his lines. Winona Ryder is remarkably good as Veronica; special praise should also go to Penelope Milford, as the teacher who tries to combat teen suicide with a feel-good rally billed as "The New Happiness." As J.D., Christian Slater is highly effective; but I think any actor that young who turns in such an accomplished Jack Nicholson impersonation ought to be sent to the fields to learn from the people—for his own good, of course. Is anyone casting a high-school picture set in Yunan?

Finally, a word of apology for my failure to review *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*. Although I fully intended to cover the film, the initial delay has now turned into a looming, permanent omission, which can be excused, if at all, only because I was nearly run down by a snow-white limousine, just as I left for the screening.

Granted, I could have picked myself off the street and proceeded as planned. But, as my heart slipped back to its usual position, clearing my line of sight, I saw

that the limo had stopped across the street from my apartment, at Congregation Anshe Tsuris. A chauffeur descended, a door flashed, and out stepped Rabbi Simcha Fefferman. "Rabbi," I cried, "what are you doing in that car?"

"This here?" he replied. "This is show business."

"You can't be serious."

"So what was it almost killed you, a joke? You should come back at maybe 6 o'clock," he told the chauffeur. "For *mairev*."

"Right, give the whole congregation a ride. Rabbi, what's happening here?"

"You didn't know? I'm in pictures," he said. "James Ivory hired me for *Slaves of New York*."

"You're acting in *that*?"

"Acting? No. I'm the religious consultant."

"Oh."

"Boychik, you look pale. The chauffeur really scared you?"

"No, it's just that all the blood rushed to my brain when I tried to figure out why they'd need an Orthodox rabbi for a movie about bohemians."

"You see? This is what I been telling you—you think too literal. This here movie, it's not about artists. This is about dress-up."

"I thought it was based on those stories Tama Janowitz wrote—you know, downtown painters, wild nightclubs, gallery-hopping, bed-hopping . . ."

"Sure. And maybe *The Ten Commandments* is about the Ten Commandments. Listen, nobody who worked on this picture ever came *near* a real bohemian, let alone anything like *art*. Believe me, these are all nice, middle-class people."

"So what have *you* got to do with it?"

"I told you already. Dress-up. You know what's a *Purimspiel*? The little girls, they get dressed up like Queen Esther, the boys pretend like they're Mordechai or the King of Persia. So, *Slaves of New York* is like that. All these nice, middle-class people, they get dressed up like they're downtown artists."

"And you supervised?"

"Sure. I made it just like at the congregation. The little girls at Purim, they don't do too good a job of dressing up. That's what makes it cute. So, the same thing in the movie. Even the director dresses up and gets it wrong. You know what he uses all the time? Split screen—like it's the latest thing. Now—in 1989."

"And it's fun?"

"Of course not. It's terrible. But they let me ride around in the limousine. And

I got a *personal* introduction to Bernadette Peters."

At this point, the rabbi began an extended comparison between Ms. Peters and the late Eleanor Powell, so I left. *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* was forgotten. But a few days later, I watched *Slaves of New York* to find out if Fefferman had been telling the truth. Sure enough—it *does* look just like it was supervised by a rabbi directing a *Purimspiel*. □

ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

Refigured Painting: The German Image 1960-88

Yard upon yard of rapidly chilling hot art gluts the spaces of the Guggenheim Museum of Art under the title "Refigured Painting: The German Image 1960-88" (until April 23), and no one without a morbid interest in the death of art will have the slightest reason to see any of it. The title, on the other hand, is not without a certain interest. It implies a narrative history for German art composed of three phases or "moments," as a German metaphysician of history would say: Figuration, Defiguration, Refiguration. The implication is that German art has reconnected itself through the figure to its original or essential impulse, from which it had been separated by a hiatus of defiguration or, more precisely, abstraction. And if the implication indeed is that German art is in essence figural, then it had been self-alienated during the abstractionist interlude by largely foreign forms—a kind of aesthetic Occupation. My sense is that the defigurationist phase must have lasted from about 1945, when the Third Reich went down in defeat, until about 1960, when German art got back on its figural track—the artistic counterpart to the "miracle" of economic recovery. Such a chronology, if accepted, must offer an opening into German artistic consciousness, which differs from that in art worlds where figuration and national identity are not so intimately conjoined. And it suggests that stylistic decisions cannot be lightly made in German art if the mere circumstance of figuration defines a national identity sufficiently deeply that one need not infuse one's art with specifically Germanic content in order for it to be spe-

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This sweet and merry month of May,
While Nature wantons in her prime
And birds to sing and beasts do play
For pleasure of the joyful time . . .

—Thomas Watson (1611)

★ ★ ★ MAY DAY! ★ ★ ★

cifically German (which accounts for the redundancies of Anselm Kiefer's ultra-Teutonic symbolism). The dates 1960 to 1988 carry a further implication. There is a uniform expressionist figurative style the world over today. So the implication is that what was German yesterday is the world today: We are all artistic Berliners. It is a tendentious title and a tendentious show.

There was a time, even in New York, when the decision to adhere to the figure—or “the image”—required great moral courage, since abstraction was dogmatized as what painting must be, and figuration was denounced as contrary to the imperatives of history. To resist, let alone reject, abstractionism carried the weight of heresy, or at the very least of a violation of the commandment against graven images. Still, it would have been regarded as a private act, like violating the Seventh Commandment. And even if the immense achievement of Pollock, De Kooning, Rothko, Motherwell and Kline was widely regarded as evidence that the United States, and in particular New York, had become the new capital of world art, figuration was hardly regarded as treason or as a betrayal of manifest American artistic destiny.

Yet Abstract Expressionist painting, little as it resembled the paintings with which Ike, like Churchill, passed his time, really was the artistic correlate and embodiment of the Eisenhower era. It was especially so perceived abroad, particularly in Germany, whose collectors were among the first to acquire American art. And if a German artist took on the abstractionist code, this was to declare a double allegiance, stylistic and political at once. It was also to turn one's back on one's Germanness. Defiguration was tantamount to de-Germanization. Of course,

figuration itself was a divided impulse. Most of the artists Hitler damned as degenerate were figural, simply not figural in the right way, according to his vision of health and beauty. Hitler had ordered inscribed over the entrance to Der Haus der Deutsche Kunst in Munich—in which he displayed his conception of appropriate figurative art—the slogan “Art is a mission demanding fanaticism.” His fanaticism consisted in purging the German museums of “degenerate art,” because he literally believed it the work of physical or mental degenerates. In Hitler's eye, politics was only a means to aesthetic redemption: “Wars pass by. The only things that exist are the works of human genius. This is the explanation of my love of art.” If the purpose of the Third Reich was to make the world safe for “healthy” figuration, it is not difficult to appreciate the political energy that then went into abstractionism in the postwar years, even if at the cost of renouncing the national identity.

One can sense the fanaticism of those times from an episode recorded in one of the Guggenheim catalogue essays. In 1953 the jury of the Deutsche Künstlerbund excluded a number of figural artists from its third annual exhibition, evidently on the ground of their not being abstractionist. The exclusions were then denounced as “The Dictatorship of the Abstractionists.” Among those excluded were some painters—Otto Dix, Max Pechstein—who a mere sixteen years earlier had been included in the notorious exhibition of Degenerate Art as exemplars of what must be extirpated as inconsistent with the kind of health and beauty Hitler simultaneously celebrated with parades and the exhibition in the Haus der Kunst. To be excluded once because they were insufficiently figurative and then because they were too figurative seemed to inflict a double moral injury on artists who ought to have been revered as martyrs and heroes. Against this background, the general return to figuration (1960-88) was a kind of spiritual homecoming, a way of healing a national wound, a way of being German and internationalist at once, if figuration was to become the new international style. And if the claim could be established that figuration really was *echt Deutsch*, Germany had a claim on being the capital of world art when figuration swept the world, as it did in the early 1980s.

By the 1970s, it was plain that abstractionism was as little destined as the Third

Reich to last a thousand years. The Age of Abstraction had ended, and abstraction itself came more and more to refer to a content of a certain sort rather than to painting abstracted of content. (It is this that doubtless justifies the inclusion of Gerhard Richter's abstract-looking works in the Guggenheim show: They too are refigured; it is just that Richter paints abstract paintings the way others paint human beings or animals or cities.) Minimalism, Conceptualism, Pop—cerebral enterprises all—became alternatives available to the 1970s artists, as indeed did Realism in all its varieties. German figurational art burst upon the art world in the 1980s as bad aesthetic news, but its messy images were no worse at the time than what had suddenly begun to appear in SoHo or, for that matter, at the Guggenheim itself, which was the first to bring to New York the awful figurations of a new generation of Italian painters. A new international style had emerged, raucously and boisterously, in the form of Neo-Expressionism—heavily figurative, portentously symbolic, sentimental, garish, huge and ugly. It was as if the entire art world were slouching toward the East Village, and the horizons of painterly intention defined as those of the rebellious student of painting in pursuit of the M.F.A.

It is true that the German artist may have had a special reason for taking this new style to its furthest limits, since little could be imagined that was at once figurative and less like the edifying Nazi classicism of those celebrations of rural dignity, moral rectitude and good military posture that Hitler endorsed in the Haus der Kunst. But the phenomenon of bad painting was worldwide, and even if an art historical demonstration exists that the Germans were the first to have it (as if this were something to be proud of), the interesting question would be why artists everywhere else found in this aggressive, strident and adolescent facture exactly the next thing to do. My own view of the matter is cynical and materialist. By the beginning of the 1980s, there was a lot of money for art, as well as a recognition that the great work of the 1950s and 1960s was appreciating rapidly. Everyone was looking for something new and important to get in on the ground floor of. The artistic response was what I have elsewhere termed Importance Art. Nothing could be Importance Art unless it looked offensive. The art of the 1980s, German or non-German, complied spectacularly with this brief. The exhibition at

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he Guggenheim shows how the Germans solved the problem of Importance.

It is an appallingly curated show. Thomas Krens, who has taken over the readership of the Guggenheim, has adopted the format of the artfair, giving segments of his ramps to single artists whose significance is transmitted by the size of their sections. Neither within nor between segments is there any effort at chronology or any thought of explaining what all this visual noise means: One is simply confronted with the aggregated works of individual artists, as if this were a kind of indoor outdoor art show. Every corner of nonramp space has been seized and, worse, an immense deltoid structure has been erected on the Guggenheim's alarmingly deteriorating floor, either to hang the spillover from the ramps or to give special preeminence to artists deemed particularly significant, like Georg Baselitz and A.R. Penck. Given the unavoidable political connotations of German expansionism and the hill doctrine of Lebensraum, the symbolic projection of conquest is almost palpable—all the more so since the Williams College Museum of Art, of which Krens was formerly director, has been arrogated a kind of Anschluss, to show those paintings for which there was no room at the Guggenheim. The Guggenheim itself has never looked more ravaged.

The reason chronology would have been important—or why its blurring is itself important—has to do with the subtext of the exhibition, namely that the Germans were already there in 1960, the rest of the world only catching up sometime in the 1980s. This holds only if the refigured painting of the 1980s in Germany really is a natural evolution out of the first efforts at refiguration in the early 1960s. And of this I am not at all sure. Baselitz's earlier canvases here, like those of his somewhat gloomier associate Eugen Schönebeck, really do seem genuinely to carry forward certain of the impulses of German Expressionist painting, especially of Kokoschka and even more of Lovis Corinth. And I could see how the German artist, once figuration was an available option, might want to express solidarity with those wonderful artists who had been vilified as degenerate by the Nazis. But Baselitz's later work seems very little connected with this. It is characteristic M.F.A. thesis work, given a special signature through Baselitz's device of turning his names upside down. His work of the 1980s has a lot more in common with

Julian Schnabel's than with that of the great modernists of the German past. And Penck's latest work could be a David Salle knockoff unless (what difference could it make?) David Salle is a Penck knockoff. So the thesis of continuity and precedence remains to be established. I think that by the 1980s the Germans were painting to a world market like everyone else, and that there really was, creatively at least, no longer a center of world art, since the same order of art was being turned out in Berlin as in New York or Milan.

But the kind of refiguration displayed here does connect these artists with those whom the curators evidently intend them to be associated in our minds: the great German Expressionists of the early twentieth century. When this exhibition leaves the Guggenheim it will, before closing in Frankfurt, go on to the Kunstmuseum in Dusseldorf, one of the venues of the notorious exhibition of Degenerate Art when it toured Germany. That is a handsome gesture, no doubt, but aside from being German and figurative, there is little rapport between those artists and German artists today. I grew up on German Expressionism, because the Detroit Institute of Art had a fine small collection of it. Recently, I had the good fortune to see a compendious exhibition of woodcuts from Die Brücke, and felt once again the power of its simplified forms, its dramatic planes, its urgent imagery, its utter honesty and directness. Only K.H. Hödicke, of those shown here, bears the slightest resemblance to his towering antecedents, and merely by comparing his canvases with the memory of those of Kirchner one is able to see how—one hates to use the word in this context—how *degenerate* the figurative impulses have become.

There is, indeed, not a redeeming painting in the show. I went twice, the second time with the painter David Reed, a gifted and generous artist, and a wonderful looker at pictures. We started out as we always do when we see art together, trying to talk some of the life into Sigmar Polke that we have on other occasions not had to work for at all in looking at other works. But it was no use. We walked faster and faster down the ramps, repelled by the arrogance and emptiness, the crudeness and shrillness, the crowing self-congratulation of painter after painter. I remembered as possibly interesting two works by Christa Näher which, subdued in tone, seemed proportional to their content and worth looking at a second

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time. My companion convinced me otherwise, and we left the Guggenheim in gloom. David brightened at the idea of going down to see, once again before the great show of Sienese art closed at the Met, the Master of the Osservanza. Cheered by the thought of good art, we went our separate ways. Whatever benefit it was that Thomas Krens believed he might have been conferring upon his institution and the city, he was wrong. My colleague Michael Brensen was charitable in calling this a *near* disaster. □

THEATER.

MOIRA HODGSON

**What the Butler Saw
Run for Your Wife!
Lend Me a Tenor
Metamorphosis**

Traditional farce is strictly bourgeois entertainment. It takes for granted the audience's belief in the conventions of society—and its ability to be titillated by errant behavior. Some small transgression of the rules sets off a complicated chain of events which requires the characters to use their wits if they are to survive with honor intact. Classic French farce is about wives and mistresses, as much a national concern as *crise de foie* and Jean Marie Le Pen. Traditional British farce pokes fun at the Church of England, homosexuals and "henpecked" husbands.

In the 1960s, Joe Orton took the typical sex farce so beloved by British middle-class audiences and turned it inside out. He parodied farce and made use of its conventions—sudden exits and entrances through different doors, double-entendres, fallen trousers, disguise and mistaken identities—as a vehicle for his own ideas, and as a way of attacking the heterosexual world. "Sex," he wrote in his diaries, "is the only way to infuriate them. Much more fucking and they'll be screaming hysterics in next to no time."

What the Butler Saw was Orton's best and last play, written just before he was bludgeoned to death by his lover in 1967. The play attacks psychiatry, religion, marriage, the government and every law of the Establishment. Sane people are mad and mad people sane. "What is the sense of being a rationalist in an irrational world?" asks one of the characters.

The Manhattan Theatre Club's revival at City Center Theater is spirited and of-

ten hilarious, briskly directed by John Tillinger with a fine cast. The title of the play refers to the arcade peep shows found at British seaside resorts, and in this case we peep into a location that holds plenty of promise: a doctor's consulting room. Dr. Prentice (Charles Keating) is interrupted by his wife (Carole Shelley) while trying to seduce an applicant for the job of secretary (Joanne Whalley-Kilmer). The entire action springs from Dr. Prentice's single transgression. There are unexpected visitors: a government inspector (Joseph Maher) who proclaims, "I represent Her Majesty's Government, your immediate superiors in madness"; a randy pageboy (Bruce Norris); and a fat policeman (Patrick Tull). Everyone gets in and out of the other people's clothes.

Although the play falls off at the end, with some too-obvious gags involving a bronze phallus from a statue of Sir Winston Churchill—this joke was cut by the censors when the play was first performed in England, the offending article replaced by a cigar—the rest of it is remarkable for its devastating salvos. Orton talked like an educated guttersnipe. His derisive dialogue has a unique epigrammatic style that combines elements of Oscar Wilde, Ronald Firbank, B movies and the priggish "shock, horror" prose of the Sunday tabloid *News of the World*. Dr. Prentice tells his wife that she was born with her legs apart and that she'll go to the grave in a Y-shaped coffin. She replies that the deafening sound of his chewing on rejuvenation pills is the reason she never has an orgasm: "My uterine contractions have been bogus for some time."

In *What the Butler Saw*, Orton was sending up English farce in the style of Ray Cooney (Cooney's *Not Now, Darling*, written with John Chapman, was running in London's West End at the same time as Orton's play, in 1969). His *Run for Your Wife!* has been packing them in at the West End for the past five years and ironically, when the show opened on Broadway recently (at the Virginia Theatre), it provoked accusations of bad taste, as did Orton's work in the 1960s. This farce, with jokes like "My husband's been acting queer lately," is rooted in the Palladium school, which thinks gays, nuns and policemen are equally hilarious. It resembles those British seaside postcards with their awful double-entendre jokes and perennial cast of stereotypes—scrawny husband, fat overbearing wife and dithering busty blonde.

Like *What the Butler Saw*, *Run for*

Your Wife! starts with one deed that provokes an irreversible chain of events. A taxi driver (Ray Cooney) has two wives, Barbara (Hilary Labow) and Mary (Kay Walbye). When he helps an old woman who is being mugged and who lands in the hospital, the police and some reporters become involved, and suddenly his carefully worked-out marriage schedule falls to pieces, threatening the stability of his ménage.

The set (which borrows from Alan Ayckbourn's *How the Other Half Loves*) shows the living rooms of the husband's two houses onstage at once, but the wives remain invisible to each other. The production is workmanlike, except for a fine performance by Paxton Whitehead as the upstairs neighbor. He has an incredible agility and sense of timing, and a body that seems to be made of rubber and springs. *Run for Your Wife!* has something to offend everybody—and has them "rolling in the aisles" to boot. Cooney, though, has failed to notice that things have changed since the 1950s, even if *News of the World* hasn't.

Ken Ludwig's *Lend Me a Tenor* (deftly directed by Jerry Zaks at the Royale Theatre) is an American farce in the classic French tradition: It has split-second timing, tightknit performances and a well-structured plot. An impresario named Saunders (Tony Bosco) has hired a famous Italian tenor, Tito Merelli (Ron Holgate), to sing at a gala performance of *Otello* in Cleveland. But is the famous tenor (who is also known as Il Stupendo) going to show up? Saunders waits for him in Merelli's hotel suite, which has six doors. With him are his daughter Maggie (J. Smith-Cameron) and his assistant Max (Victor Garber), a bespectacled milquetoast in a cardigan who is, of course, in love with Maggie—and who nurses a secret hope of being a tenor on the opera stage. Everyone wants to go to bed with Merelli: Diana (Caroline Lagerfelt), a willowy blond soprano; Maggie; and even the head of the Opera Guild (Jane Connell), who arrives all in silver, looking "just like the Chrysler building." But when Merelli accidentally swallows too many sleeping pills (mixing them with a generous dose of chianti) who will perform in his place?

Despite clever twists of the plot—and splendid performances by Bosco and Garber—*Lend Me a Tenor* never really flies because the dialogue isn't witty enough. Still, it's ten times better an evening than the Cooney farce, and the spectacle of two Othellos blundering about the stage

is as funny as the two Groucho Marxes in *Duck Soup*.

Proving once again that a big star and an adaptation of a classic literary work that everyone has heard of but not necessarily read will sell the house out every time, Mikhail Baryshnikov appeared for a limited run in another sort of farce, a stage version of Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* (directed by Steven Berkoff at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre). Almost anything Baryshnikov does onstage (except speak) is compelling, even hanging upside down from a cage of metal pipes or lying on his back twitching his hands and feet. But what has any of it to do with Kafka?

When Kafka wrote *Metamorphosis* he begged his publisher not to illustrate Gregor Samsa's transformation into an insect. Instead, the cover of the original edition showed the much more frightening image of a door opening into darkness. Berkoff has for the most part removed the narrator, so that Samsa speaks. Instead of a soul in torment, we get a man who is victimized by the greedy bourgeois family he supports, waking up one morning to find himself turned into a bug. Berkoff has turned Kafka's powerful metaphor into whining and dining.

The stage is bare except for three black stools, with a cube made of steel poles suspended in the background. The characters enter as silhouettes (the actors are dressed in various shades of black, gray and white). The mother (Laura Esterman), father (René Auberjonois) and sister (Madeleine Potter) remain mostly downstage where we see them eating, arguing and belching, while Baryshnikov creeps around in the back and hangs from the steel poles. Movements are highly stylized and coordinated with the plunks and pings of Larry Spivack's score.

The play (which was first produced in the late 1960s in London with Berkoff himself as Gregor Samsa) resembles a high school production of Brecht. The characters are all caricatures (the family is straight out of *The Seven Deadly Sins*). The lighting, effectively stark most of the time, turns all dreamy blue, like something from *Oklahoma!*, for flashbacks to happier times.

While Kafka's story works as told in the matter-of-fact tone of the narrator, Baryshnikov's high-pitched musings on his predicament carry no weight. The piece has no dramatic tension, and makes its one-and-a-half hours seem very long indeed. I'd rather read the comic book. □

LETTERS.

(Continued From Page 506)

tionalized"; the Israeli government invites charges of "barbarism"; but talk of racism and fascism is really going too far.

Ansar III was opened in March 1988. A month later the Database Project on Palestinian Human Rights reported, "Detainees are forced to work in the desert sun from 5 am to 8 pm with only one bucket of water for every 25 prisoners. . . . [They] feared for their lives if the situation did not improve before summer." In June the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights cited a smuggled appeal by detainees: "Against us is conducted a war of starvation, thirst and humiliation." In July there were fifteen to twenty cases of sunstroke a day because of exposure—prisoners being prohibited from covering their heads while roasting in the sun—and lack of water. Unable to wash, prisoners are roundly afflicted with skin diseases. "You can't imagine," said an attorney interviewed by the Lawyers Committee, "what it means when you are asked to make arguments about justice when your client is stinking because he has not been able to take a shower for months and is in the same set of clothes in which he was arrested."

Against Ackerman's statement that prisoners are not denied food, mark the affidavit to Israel's High Court of Justice from Kamal al-Rifati, a former detainee:

The bread is always dry and rotten. . . . From time to time we get one orange to be divided among two prisoners or a rotten melon to be divided among seven prisoners. Sometimes we had parts of vegetables not fit for human consumption, there were days that we missed even those. . . . the only meat was canned and the expiration dates on the cans were no more recent than 1985. The special colors of the meat confirmed its unacceptable quality. . . . every day prisoners suffer from food poisoning.

In their appeal the detainees called Ansar III the "camp of slow death," a place "teeming with reptiles, insects and rats." Al-Rifati recalled a case in which forty-two prisoners bound hand and foot were thrown into two isolation cells, each measuring two square meters and reeking of excrement.

But debate over horrors at Ansar III obscures its fundamental injustice. Its 1,800 or so prisoners are administrative detainees, interned without trial or charge, often after failing to "confess" under interrogation. Palestinians from the occupied territories are sent there, for six-month renewable periods, by I.D.F. military commanders, not by courts of law. Their very presence in Ansar III, located on Israeli territory, violates the Fourth Geneva Convention's prohibition of the detention of occupied people outside occu-

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pied land. The Fourth Geneva Convention was drafted in response to the catastrophe of World War II.

These are trifles to Ackerman, whose discerning faculties make a run for it at the police door. In *Middle East Report* for May-June 1988, Penny Johnson, Lee O'Brien and Joost Hilberman, all of whom live or work in Ramallah, wrote that on January 20 "scores of Israeli troops had rampaged through the streets of Ramallah, beating shopkeepers and young men behind the 'bloody wall' and forcing stores open." A few days later *The Washington Post* announced, "The blood-stained wall has become the new symbol of Israel's occupation." Even *The New York Times* couldn't miss it, quoting a taxi driver: "We saw soldiers grab a kid from the street near the vegetable market. They tied his hands behind him and beat him all the way from the street to the wall. They pushed him up against the wall and then the soldiers, about six or seven of them, kicked him, punched him and smashed his head and body with their rifle butts." The man didn't say if the fluid that came out of the boy was human blood or indeed blood at all, and now it seems that the military police had the wall cleaned up by the time I wrote my column. So it's all right then. I wonder if Ackerman would endorse with the same idiotic credulity the military's general record on investigations: 270 files opened in cases of death, as of a December 1988 report by Al Haq/Law in the Service of Man; only 2 indictments for murder or manslaughter, the latter eventually drawing a sentence of one year; only 32 disciplinary actions of any kind.

On the matter of injections, fieldworkers for the Database Project offer case studies from Amari, Balata and Dheishe refugee camps; also from Gaza. Al Haq took the following affidavit from a man who asked to remain anonymous:

He took a piece of white cloth marked with blue lines . . . and covered my eyes. . . . one of the soldiers took my right hand and punctured my arm, then took the syringe out and started feeling my arm, looking for another place. I felt he was looking for an artery. Then he put the needle into my arm for a few seconds and pulled it out. He took the patch off my eyes and thus I saw the syringe in his hands. . . . I noticed this time that the syringe was connected to the rubber tube which in turn was connected to a bottle covered with a piece of cloth, making it extremely difficult to see its contents. One of the soldiers held my right hand and another my left while the first soldier started scratching the upper part of my arms with the needle, causing six cuts varying in length between 5-7 cms. My arm bled.

Al Haq received similar reports from Gaza.

It is perverse that Ackerman quibbles over whether the day on which Mohammed

Abu-Aker's body was shattered by an exploding bullet—resulting in the removal of virtually his entire intestine, experimental surgery, months of excruciating pain fighting for life—was quiet or raucous. For the record, the Palestine Human Rights Information Office has stated that "all was quiet in the usually active refugee camp," also that Mohammed, a popular figure in the camp, was shot by a sniper overlooking his home.

Ackerman objects to the use of the word "racist" in describing Israeli motivations in the collective punishment of Palestinians and invokes the "all-encompassing paranoia that Jewish Israelis suffer in their relations with Arabs." Suffering? Who has been murdered without pause, bludgeoned, humiliated, stripped of their land, tossed from their houses, threatened with "transfer" or actually deported, silenced, tortured, kidnapped, buried alive, referred to as "cockroaches" and "grasshoppers," denied schooling and now any community structure, restricted in the most mundane aspects of daily life—punished, in effect, "for their desire to be"?

Those words conclude the devastating (though, even at 355 pages, uncomprehensive) Al Haq report "Punishing a Nation." Their accuracy is evidenced a thousand times. Four soldiers accused of beating to death a man who had run away from them are acquitted, one of them having testified, "I wasn't concerned with the injured man. They're Arabs. They want to kill us." In the aftermath of the October 31 Palestinian firebomb attack that killed a Jewish woman and her three children, Rabin urges the death penalty for "terrorists who carry out murders of women and children while losing all sense of humanity." At least 474 Palestinians, women and children included, have been killed since the beginning of the *intifada*, and lately the I.D.F. has begun to drop incendiary devices in the shape of candy bars; no one has been made to pay for it. Soldiers involved in burying four Palestinians alive are given four- and five-month sentences, which two months later are reduced by half. Hasan 'Abd-al-Rahman Hasa Salih, beaten and buried alive in a separate incident, is two months later recognized by soldiers on a house-to-house ransacking of his village and pounded savagely, his head bashed open with a rock, requiring emergency brain surgery. In a public opinion poll cited in *Davar* last July, 38 percent of Israeli Jews say they do not view Palestinians as people with their own rights; an additional 16.8 percent say "that depends on which rights are at stake." Referring to Israel's attempts to subdue the *intifada*, Shamir declares, "The means are insignificant; the main thing is the goal."

Still, people like Ackerman whine and grow indignant when anyone calls this mentality by its true name. For twenty-one years the Israeli military has concentrated in its hands all legislative, executive and judicial power in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, making normal civil life impossible. The situation that

exists now is a refinement of that process. More than 1,250 military orders are in force in the West Bank; more than 900 in Gaza. New, more elaborate legislation has given the military vast powers over every aspect of Palestinians' daily life—economic, cultural, personal, "reaching such detail," according to Al Haq, "even as to prohibit the growing of tomatoes or the picking of wild thyme."

Now Ackerman, boasting of her solidarity visits and misrepresenting what I originally wrote, asks rhetorically how it is that groups like Dai L'Kibush can function. In her assessment of the situation in Israel and the occupied territories she mimes the posture ascribed to the Zionist left a couple of years ago by Israeli activist Witold Jedlicki in an article in *Against the Current*. He called it

singularly weak, hesitant, devoid of conviction, hampered by considerations of patriotism and respectability and mentally dependent on definitions of reality and agendas imposed by the officialdom. . . . Clinging desperately to their middle-of-the-roadism and fearing "extremism," the Zionist Left in both Israel and the US is mortally afraid to know what meanings Jewish racism and fascism have for the Palestinians under the Israeli occupation.

Clearly, from where Israeli Jews stand Israel is not a fascist state. From where South African whites stand, South Africa is not a fascist state either. Fascist elements in any society do not foreclose the possibility for the privileged group to express opposition, though recent arrests and the attempts to intimidate Yesh Gvul illustrate that Israel Jews are not immune from brute police actions for their dissent. That Ackerman discerns hope from the soldier's comment about Lebanon—where 2,000 civilians were slaughtered in Israel's 1978 invasion and at least 20,000 in the 1982 invasion, some of them under the eyes of the Golani Brigade where a vicious "counterterrorism" program similar to that employed by Latin American death squads has been conducted in the "Security Zone" since at least 1985; where the I.D.F. has carried out murder, beatings, demolition of houses and torture on an ever greater scale than in the occupied territories—indicates a vision of reality maimed beyond recognition.

Finally, as my former colleague Karim Bennouna, who provided much research here points out, while Ackerman comfortably dismisses crimes against the Palestinians, those who seek to document those crimes risk punishment every day. Terry Boulata, a 22-year old fieldworker with the Palestine Human Rights Information Office, was recently arrested on spurious grounds. Having been denied bail despite a severe liver illness, she remains in prison awaiting a verdict, which could take up to two months. Readers who want to help should contact Bennouna at the Database Project, (312) 987-1830.

Alexander Cockburn

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/EDITOR for *Socialist Review*. Search extended. Ideal candidate will be intellectually ambitious, knowledgeable and committed to the articulation of diverse viewpoints. S/he will possess good writing skills and must have proven fundraising skills. Women and minorities encouraged to apply. Two-year commitment: \$20,000 annually, plus medical benefits. Send résumé, letter and writing sample to: CSRE, 3202 Adeline, Berkeley, CA 94703. Deadline: April 22.

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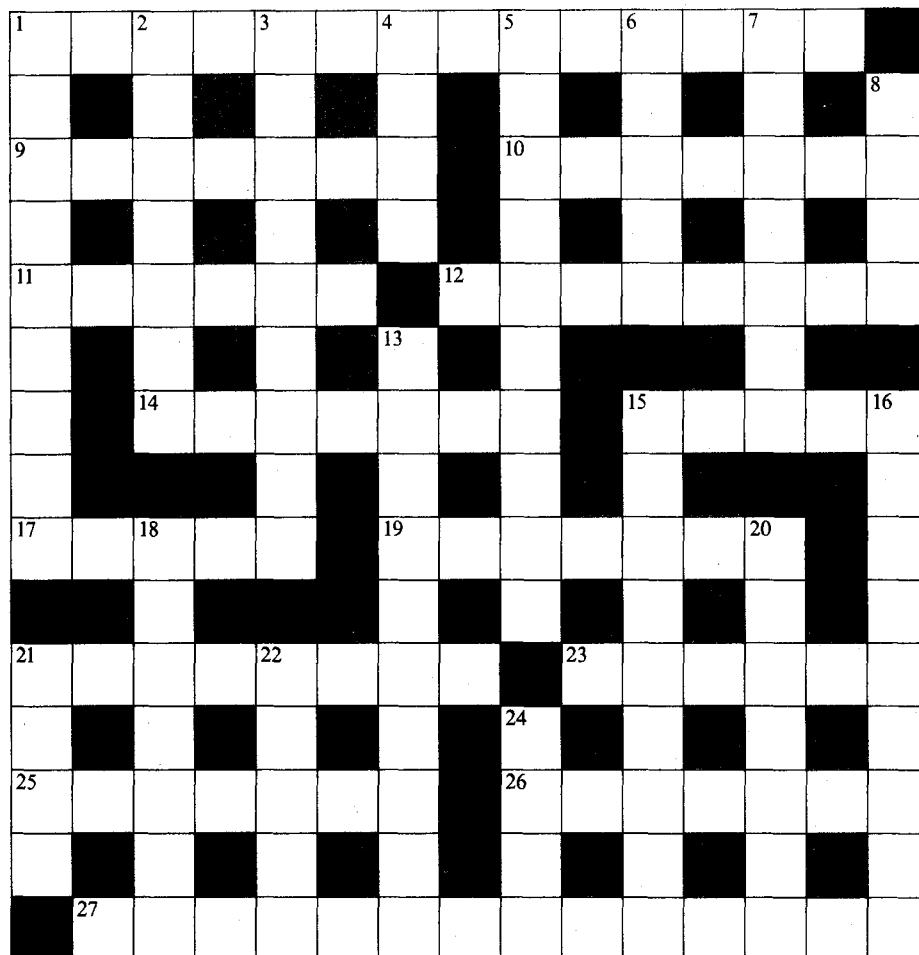
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SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2237

C	C	O	R	D	S		B	I	S	E	C	T	S
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ACROSS

- 1 Did the British Foreign Office have to break it to find out what the Emperor was up to? (Or did everyone know the laws?) (10,4)
- 9 Is kept inside, and stays put outside. (That's what the underground does, traditionally. (7)
- 10 The boss of the old Portuguese colony describes the run that put us in front. (2-5)
- 11 The girl proves that the province of District Attorney is still masculine! (6)
- 12 Suits the purposes with a coiled snake? No wonder it's left alone! (8)
- 14 Pull a tooth? That might be the solution! (7)
- 15 Obviously the cat doesn't weigh very much. (5)
- 17 Proving a broken heart can still be mended to obtain what the submissive should inherit. (5)
- 19 Offered forbidden fruit, possibly. (7)
- 21 A friend—a French friend—with no horse? (7)
- 23 Robert E.'s method provided some extra latitude. (6)
- 25 As time passes, the building extension has vaulted recesses. (7)
- 26 Something that keeps the operation from working needs a word of disapproval—but it may be only imaginary. (7)
- 27 It wasn't a fish and a good queen that inspired his opera. (6,8)

- 2 Forster took one to India as a title, though it might be only a small part of the book. (7)
- 3 Hang on and get rid of your following—or give it this final try. (4,5)
- 4 Was there quite a pile-up here? (Not exactly so as you can see it!) (4)
- 5 Eventually it'll be how the fun-lover keeps busy! (2,4,4)
- 6 Is ours such a society of a lot of students or not? (5)
- 7 Behaves with relative finish—such being soft and pliable. (7)
- 8 A study made of the Gulf? (4)
- 13 Is that what good-looking attendants have to do? You'll find out! (4,3,3)
- 15 It makes us go white, and is more important than anything else. (9)
- 16 Describing the time of a poetic get-up? (5,4)
- 18 Press this for information about the rent. (7)
- 20 What the string section of the striking Musician's Union may be told to do—though there are signs of it by the score. (4,3)
- 21 See 1 down
- 22 Bill might be saved by one, along with a lot of others. (5)
- 24 Its old equivalent was literally a high wood. (4)

DOWN

- 1 and 21 down The first may be prose, but not the second—like Coleridge's *Rime*. (9,4)

SEE LAST WEEK'S
SOLUTION AT LEFT

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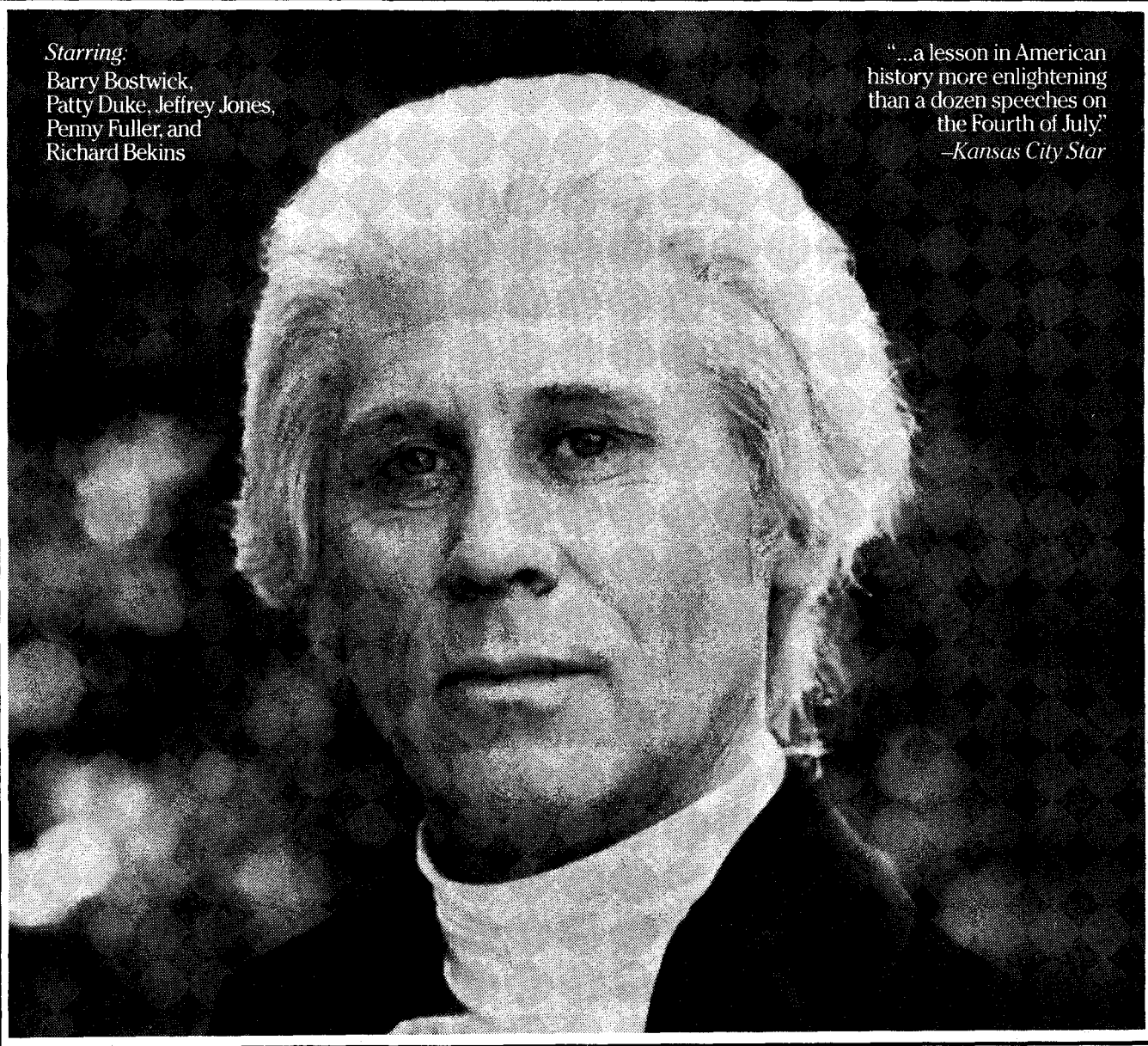
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